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TYPES OF ENGLISH DRAMA

1660–1780

EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS WITH
NOTES, BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, AND
AIRS OF "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"

BY

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TO

JOHN MATTHEWS MANLY

MY FRIEND AND TEACHER

PREFACE

The plays forming the present collection were first produced during the hundred and twenty years following the Restoration of Charles II. All have literary or dramatic merit that will commend them to modern readers, and as a group they adequately represent the theatrical fashions of London between 1660 and 1780. Wycherley and the second-rate tragedians of the late seventeenth century have not sufficient historical importance to justify the reprinting of plays quite out of keeping with modern taste; moreover, several writers highly characteristic of the sentimental group seem sufficiently revealed through satire. With these exceptions the plays give an illustrative summary of English dramatic history from Dryden to Sheridan.

All but two of the texts are from the first editions. Of *Tom Thumb* the 1731 edition is clearly preferable to earlier ones, for it has the elaborate notes that make this play as interesting to the reader as to the spectator. These notes are unquestionably Fielding's own work. In the case of *The School for Scandal* a choice of text is more difficult. For reasons given in the notes, the text used is from Thomas Moore's 1821 edition of Sheridan. Until plans for a collation of all the manuscript materials have been carried through, this text must be counted authoritative.

Textual emendations occur only when needed to remove errors in printing, but in several ways the format has been modernized. Since the present work is for the literary student, not the linguist, the practice of modern editors of Shakespeare and other dramatists has been followed in substituting the usual mechanical devices of modern printing for those of earlier centuries. The needless, and often misleading, use of italic type has been eliminated, the punctuation and spelling have been modernized, and a few changes have been made in the division into scenes. All additions to the text have been bracketed as they occur, with explanation wherever the original form might be obscured. Abbreviated stage directions have been expanded without notice. There has been some expurgation of objectionable words.

In carrying through this task I have become indebted to many friends and many books. I am under obligation to the librarians of Harvard University and the Library of Congress for granting all my requests. My greater obligation, however, is to Mr. Frederic F. Norcross and Mr. Harold B. Wrenn of Chicago for the use of first editions in the private collection of the late Mr. John H. Wrenn; their kindness made immediately accessible over half the texts needed for collation, as well as the valuable bibliographical notes of Mr. T. J. Wise on particular editions. Many stray facts for

the General Notes have been found in previous editions of separate plays; such help has been acknowledged by giving the initials of all editors cited as authorities. Among my colleagues at the University of Chicago Professor Charles H. Beeson has been particularly kind in assisting with the quotations from Latin authors, and Professor Manly has been my adviser throughout the undertaking. It is hoped that the completed work may give new meaning to the English drama of the eighteenth century and so justify the favor and good will of all those giving assistance. Without their help I should have found the work far more difficult.

D. H. S.

CHICAGO

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TYPES OF ENGLISH DRAMA

THE REHEARSAL

By George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham [and Others]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

[Men]

Bayes
Johnson
Smith
Two Kings of Brentford
Prince Pretty-man
Prince Volscius
Gentleman-Usher
Physician
Drawcansir
General
Lieutenant-General
Cordelio
Tom Thimble
Fisherman
Sun
Thunder
Players
Soldiers
Two Heralds
Four Cardinals
Mayor
Judges
Sergeants at Arms

[Women]

Amaryllis
Cloris
Parthenope
Pallas
Lightning
Moon
Earth

Attendants of Men and Women

Scene: *Brentford*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

PROLOGUE

We might well call this short mock-play of ours
A posy made of weeds instead of flowers;
Yet such have been presented to your noses,
And there are such, I fear, who thought 'em roses.
Would some of 'em were here, to see, this night,
What stuff it is in which they took delight.
Here, brisk, insipid blades, for wit, let fall
Sometimes dull sense; but oft'ner, none at all:
There, strutting heroes, with a grim-faced train,
Shall brave the gods, in King Cambyses'[1] vein.
For (changing rules, of late, as if men writ
In spite of reason, nature, art, and wit),
Our poets make us laugh at tragedy,
And with their comedies they make us cry.
Now, critics, do your worst, that here are met;
For, like a rook,[2] I have hedged in my bet.
If you approve, I shall assume the state
Of those high-flyers whom I imitate;
And justly too, for I will show you more
Than ever they vouchsafed to show before:
I will both represent the feats they do,
And give you all their reasons for 'em too.
Some honor to me will from this arise;
But if, by my endeavors, you grow wise,
And what was once so praised you now despise,
Then I'll cry out, swelled with poetic rage,
'Tis I, John Lacy, have reformed your stage.

1 Cf. *1 Henry IV*, II, iv, 422-426.

ACT I

Scene I

Enter Johnson *and* Smith

Johnson. Honest Frank! I'm glad to see thee with all my heart: how long hast thou been in town?

Smith. Faith, not above an hour: and, if I had not met you here, I had gone to look you out; for I long to talk with you freely, of all the strange new things we have heard in the country.

Johnson. And, by my troth, I have longed as much to laugh with you, at all the impertinent, dull, fantastical things we are tired out with here.

Smith. Dull and fantastical! that's an excellent composition. Pray, what are our men of business doing?

Johnson. I ne'er enquire after 'em. Thou know'st my humor lies another way.

2 sharper.

I love to please myself as much and to trouble others as little as I can, and therefore do naturally avoid the company of those solemn fops who, being incapable of reason, and insensible of wit and pleasure, are always looking grave and troubling one another, in hopes to be thought men of business.

SMITH. Indeed, I have ever observed that your grave lookers are the dullest of men.

JOHNSON. Aye, and of birds, and beasts too; your gravest bird is an owl, and your gravest beast is an ass.

SMITH. Well, but how dost thou pass thy time?

JOHNSON. Why, as I use to do—eat and drink as well as I can, have a she-friend to be private with in the afternoon, and sometimes see a play; where there are such things, Frank,—such hideous, monstrous things,—that it has almost made me forswear the stage and resolve to apply myself to the solid nonsense of your pretenders to business, as the more ingenious pastime.

SMITH. I have heard, indeed, you have had lately many new plays, and our country wits commend 'em.

JOHNSON. Aye, so do some of our City wits too; but they are of the new kind of wits.

SMITH. New kind? what kind is that?

JOHNSON. Why, your blade, your frank persons, your drolls—fellows that scorn to imitate nature, but are given altogether to elevate and surprise.

SMITH. Elevate and surprise? Prithee, make me understand the meaning of that.

JOHNSON. Nay, by my troth, that's a hard matter; I don't understand that myself. 'Tis a phrase they have got among them, to express their no-meaning by. I'll tell you, as well as I can, what it is. Let me see; 'tis fighting, loving, sleeping, rhyming, dying, dancing, singing, crying; and everything but thinking and sense.

Mr. BAYES *passes o'er the stage*

BAYES. Your most obsequious and most observant very servant, sir.

JOHNSON. Godso, this is an author! I'll fetch him to you.

SMITH. Nay, prithee, let him alone.

JOHNSON. Nay, by the Lord, I'll have him. [*Goes after him*] Here he is. I have caught him.—Pray, sir, for my sake, will you do a favor to this friend of mine?

BAYES. Sir, it is not within my small capacity to do favors, but receive 'em, especially from a person that does wear the honorable title you are pleased to impose, sir, upon this. [*Bowing to* SMITH] Sweet sir, your servant.

SMITH. Your humble servant, sir.

JOHNSON. But wilt thou do me a favor, now?

BAYES. Aye, sir. What is't?

JOHNSON. Why, to tell him the meaning of thy last play.

BAYES. How, sir, the meaning!—do you mean the plot?

JOHNSON. Aye, aye—anything.

BAYES. Faith, sir, the intrigo's now quite out of my head: but I have a new one, in my pocket, that I may say is a virgin; 't has never yet been blown upon. I must tell you one thing, 'tis all new wit; and, though I say it, a better than my last—and you know well enough how that took. In fine, it shall read, and write, and act, and plot, and show—aye, and pit, box and gallery, I gad, with any play in Europe. This morning is its last rehearsal, in their habits and all that, as it is to be acted; and if you and your friend will do it but the honor to see it in its virgin attire—though, perhaps, it may blush—I shall not be ashamed to discover its nakedness unto you. [*Puts his hand in his pocket*] I think it is o' this side.

JOHNSON. Sir, I confess I am not able to answer you in this new way; but if you please to lead, I shall be glad to follow you; and I hope my friend will do so too.

SMITH. Aye, sir, I have no business so considerable as should keep me from your company.

BAYES. Yes, here it is.—No, cry you mercy! this is my book of drama commonplaces, the mother of many other plays.

JOHNSON. Drama commonplaces! pray, what's that?

BAYES. Why, sir, some certain helps that we men of art have found it convenient to make use of.

SMITH. How, sir, help for wit?

BAYES. Aye, sir, that's my position. And I do here aver that no man yet the sun e'er shone upon has parts sufficient to furnish out a stage except it be with the help of these my rules.

JOHNSON. What are those rules, I pray?

BAYES. Why, sir, my first rule is the "rule of transversion," or "*regula duplex*"—changing verse into prose, or prose into verse, alternative as you please.

SMITH. How's that, sir, by a rule, I pray?

BAYES. Why, thus, sir—nothing more easy when understood. I take a book in my hand—either at home or elsewhere, for that's all one—if there be any wit in't, as there is no book but has some, I transverse it: that is, if it be prose, put it into verse (but that takes up some time); if it be verse, put it into prose.

JOHNSON. Methinks, Mr. Bayes, that putting verse into prose should be called transprosing.

BAYES. By my troth, a very good notion, and hereafter it shall be so.

SMITH. Well, sir, and what d'ye do with it then?

BAYES. Make it my own. 'Tis so altered that no man can know it. My next rule is the rule of record, and by way of table-book. Pray, observe.

JOHNSON. Well, we hear you: go on.

BAYES. As thus. I come into a coffee-house, or some other place where witty men resort. I make as if I minded nothing (do you mark?), but as soon as any one speaks, pop! I slap it down, and make that, too, my own.

JOHNSON. But, Mr. Bayes, are not you sometimes in danger of their making you restore, by force, what you have gotten thus by art?

BAYES. No, sir, the world's unmindful; they never take notice of these things.

SMITH. But pray, Mr. Bayes, among all your other rules, have you no one rule for invention?

BAYES. Yes, sir, that's my third rule that I have here in my pocket.

SMITH. What rule can that be?

BAYES. Why, sir, when I have anything to invent, I never trouble my head about it, as other men do; but presently[1] turn o'er this book, and there I have, at one view, all that Perseus, Montaigne, Seneca's tragedies, Horace, Juvenal, Claudian, Pliny, Plutarch's Lives, and the rest, have ever thought upon this subject; and so, in a trice, by leaving out a few words or putting in others of my own, the business is done.

JOHNSON. Indeed, Mr. Bayes, this is as sure and compendious a way of wit as ever I heard of.

BAYES. Aye, sirs; when you come to write yourselves, o' my word you'll find it so. But, gentlemen, if you make the least scruple of the efficacy of these my rules, do but come to the play-house and you shall judge of 'em by the effects.

SMITH. We'll follow you, sir. [*Exeunt*]

Enter three Players *upon the stage*

1ST PLAYER. Have you your part perfect?

2D PLAYER. Yes, I have it without book, but I do not understand how it is to be spoken.

3D PLAYER. And mine is such a one as I can't guess for my life what humor I'm to be in—whether angry, melancholy, merry, or in love. I don't know what to make on't.

1ST PLAYER. Phoo! the author will be here presently[1] and he'll tell us all. You must know, this is the new way of writing; and these hard things please forty times better than the old plain way. For, look you, sir, the grand design upon the stage is to keep the auditors in suspense; for to guess presently at the plot and the sense, tries 'em before the end of the first act. Now, here, every line surprises you and brings in new matter. And, then, for scenes, clothes, and dancing, we put 'em quite down, all that ever went before us—and these are the things, you know, that are essential to a play.

1 immediately.

2D PLAYER. Well, I am not of thy mind, but so it gets us money 'tis no great matter.

Enter BAYES, JOHNSON, *and* SMITH

BAYES. Come, come in, gentlemen. Y'are very welcome, Mr.—a—. Ha' you your part ready? 213

1ST PLAYER. Yes, sir.

BAYES. But do you understand the true humor of it?

1ST PLAYER. Aye, sir, pretty well.

BAYES. And Amaryllis, how does she do? Does not her armor become her?

3D PLAYER. Oh, admirably! 220

BAYES. I'll tell you, now, a pretty conceit. What do you think I'll make 'em call her, anon, in this play?

SMITH. What, I pray? 224

BAYES. Why, I'll make 'em call her Armaryllis, because of her armor—ha, ha, ha!

JOHNSON. That will be very well, indeed.

BAYES. Aye, it's a pretty little rogue; she is my mistress. I knew her face would set off armor extremely, and, to tell you true, I writ that part only for her. Well, gentlemen, I dare be bold to say, without vanity, I'll show you something here that's very ridiculous, I gad. [*Exeunt* Players] 234

JOHNSON. Sir, that we do not doubt of.

BAYES. Pray, sir, let's sit down.—Look you, sir, the chief hinge of this play, upon which the whole plot moves and turns, and that causes the variety of all the several accidents, which, you know, are the thing in nature that make up the grand refinement of a play, is, that I suppose two kings to be of the same place—as, for example, at Brentford, for I love to write familiarly. Now the people having the same relations to 'em both, the same affections, the same duty, the same obedience, and all that, are divided among themselves in point of *devoir* and interest, how to behave themselves equally between 'em—these kings differing sometimes in particular, though in the main they agree.—I know not whether I make myself well understood. 253

JOHNSON. I did not observe you, sir; pray, say that again.

BAYES. Why, look you, sir (nay, I beseech you, be a little curious[1] in taking notice of this, or else you'll never understand my notion of the thing), the people being embarrassed by their equal ties to both, and the sovereigns concerned in a reciprocal regard, as well to their own interest as the good of the people, may make a certain kind of a—you understand me—upon which there does arise several disputes, turmoils, heart-burnings, and all that.—In fine, you'll apprehend it better when you see it. 268

[*Exit, to call the* Players]

SMITH. I find the author will be very much obliged to the players, if they can make any sense of this. 271

Enter BAYES

BAYES. Now, gentlemen, I would fain ask your opinion of one thing. I have made a prologue and an epilogue which may both serve for either—do you mark? Nay, they may both serve too, I gad, for any other play as well as this. 277

SMITH. Very well. That's, indeed, artificial.[2]

BAYES. And I would fain ask your judgments, now, which of them would do best for the prologue. For, you must know, there is, in nature, but two ways of making very good prologues. The one is by civility, by insinuation, good language, and all that, to—a—in a manner, steal your plaudit from the courtesy of the auditors; the other, by making use of some certain personal things, which may keep a hank upon such censuring persons as cannot otherways, a gad, in nature, be hindred from being too free with their tongues. To which end, my first prologue is, that I come out in a long black veil, and a great, huge hang-man behind me, with a furred cap and his sword drawn; and there tell 'em plainly that if, out of good nature, they will not like my play, why I gad, I'll e'en kneel down, and he shall cut my head off. Whereupon they all clapping—a— 300

1 careful. 2 well contrived.

SMITH. But suppose they do not.

BAYES. Suppose! Sir, you may suppose what you please, I have nothing to do with your suppose, sir, nor am not at all mortified at it—not at all, sir; I gad, not one jot. "Suppose," quoth a!— [*Walks away*]

JOHNSON. Phoo! prithee, Bayes, don't mind what he says. He's a fellow newly come out of the country; he knows nothing of what's the relish, here, of the town.

BAYES. If I writ, sir, to please the country, I should have followed the old, plain way: but I write for some persons of quality and peculiar friends of mine, that understand what flame and power in writing is; and they do me the right, sir, to approve of what I do.

JOHNSON. Aye, aye, they will clap, I warrant you; never fear it.

BAYES. I'm sure the design's good: that cannot be denied. And then, for language, I gad, I defy 'em all, in nature, to mend it. Besides, sir, I have printed above a hundred sheets of paper, to insinuate the plot into the boxes: and withal, have appointed two or three dozen of my friends to be ready in the pit, who, I'm sure, will clap, and so the rest, you know, must follow; and then pray, sir, what becomes of your suppose?—Ha, ha, ha!

JOHNSON. Nay, if the business be so well laid, it cannot miss.

BAYES. I think so, sir, and therefore would choose this for the prologue. For if I could engage 'em to clap before they see the play, you know 'twould be so much the better, because then they were engaged; for let a man write never so well, there are, now-a-days, a sort of persons they call critics, that, I gad, have no more wit in 'em than so many hobby-horses. But they'll laugh you, sir, and find fault, and censure things that, I gad, I'm sure they are not able to do themselves—a sort of envious persons that emulate the glories of persons of parts and think to build their fame by calumniating of persons that, I gad, to my knowledge, of all persons in the world are, in nature, the persons that do as much despise all that as —a—In fine, I'll say no more of 'em.

JOHNSON. Aye, aye, you have said enough of 'em, in conscience—I'm sure more than they'll ever be able to answer.

BAYES. Why, I'll tell you, sir, sincerely, and *bona fide*; were it not for the sake of some ingenious persons and choice female spirits that have a value for me, I would see 'em all hanged before I would e'er more set pen to paper; but let 'em live in ignorance like ingrates.

JOHNSON. Aye, marry! that were a way to be revenged of 'em, indeed; and, if I were in your place, now, I would do it.

BAYES. No sir: there are certain ties upon me that I cannot be disengaged from; otherwise, I would. But pray, sir, how do you like my hangman?

SMITH. By my troth, sir, I should like him very well.

BAYES. Aye, but how do you like it?—for I see you can judge. Would you have it for the prologue, or the epilogue?

JOHNSON. Faith, sir, it's so good, let it e'en serve for both.

BAYES. No, no! that won't do. Besides, I have made another.

JOHNSON. What other, sir?

BAYES. Why, sir, my other is Thunder and Lightning.

JOHNSON. That's greater; I'd rather stick to that.

BAYES. Do you think so? I'll tell you then; though there have been many witty prologues written of late, yet I think you'll say this is a *non pareillo*. I'm sure nobody has hit upon it yet. For here, sir, I make my prologue to be dialogue: and as in my first you see I strive to oblige the auditors by civility, by good nature, and all that, so in this by the other way, *in terrorem*, I choose for the persons Thunder and Lightning. Do you apprehend the conceit?

JOHNSON. Phoo, pox! then you have it cocksure. They'll be hanged before they'll dare affront an author that has 'em at that lock.[1]

BAYES. I have made, too, one of the most delicate, dainty similes in the whole world, I gad, if I knew but how to apply it.

[1] A wrestling term.

SMITH. Let's hear it, I pray you.
BAYES. 'Tis an allusion to love.

So boar and sow, when any storm is nigh,
Snuff up, and smell it gath'ring in the sky:
Boar beckons sow to trot in chestnut groves,
And there consummate their unfinished loves.
Pensive, in mud, they wallow all alone,
And snort and gruntle to each other's moan.

—How do you like it now, ha?

JOHNSON. Faith, 'tis extraordinary fine; and very applicable to Thunder and Lightning, methinks, because it speaks of a storm.

BAYES. I gad, and so it does, now I think on't. Mr. Johnson, I thank you, and I'll put it in *profecto*. Come out, Thunder and Lightning.

Enter Thunder *and* Lightning

THUNDER. I am the bold Thunder.

BAYES. Mr. Cartwright, prithee, speak a little louder, and with a hoarser voice. "I am the bold Thunder?" Pshaw! speak it me in a voice that thunders it out indeed: I am the bold Thunder!

THUNDER. I am the bold Thunder.
LIGHTNING. The brisk Lightning, I.

BAYES. Nay, you must be quick and nimble. —The brisk Lightning, I.—That's my meaning.

THUNDER. I am the bravest Hector of the sky.
LIGHTNING. And I, fair Helen, that made Hector die.
THUNDER. I strike men down.
LIGHTNING. I fire the town.
THUNDER. Let the critics take heed how they grumble,
For then begin I for to rumble.
LIGHTNING. Let the ladies allow us their graces,
Or I'll blast all the paint on their faces,
And dry up their peter[1] to soot.
THUNDER. Let the critics look to't.
LIGHTNING. Let the ladies look to't.
THUNDER. For Thunder will do't.
LIGHTNING. For Lightning will shoot.
THUNDER. I'll give you dash for dash.
LIGHTNING. I'll give you flash for flash. Gallants, I'll singe your feather.
THUNDER. I'll Thunder you together.
BOTH. Look to't, look to't; we'll do't, we'll do't; look to't, we'll do't.
[*Twice or thrice repeated*]
[*Exeunt Ambo*]

BAYES. That's all. 'Tis but a flash of a prologue—a droll.
SMITH. 'Tis short, indeed, but very terrible.
BAYES. Aye, when the simile is in, it will do to a miracle, I gad. Come, come, begin the play.

Enter First Player

1ST PLAYER. Sir, Mr. Ivory is not come yet, but he'll be here presently; he's but two doors off.

BAYES. Come then, gentlemen, let's go out and take a pipe of tobacco. [*Exeunt*]

ACT II

SCENE I

Enter BAYES, JOHNSON, *and* SMITH

BAYES. Now, sir, because I'll do nothing here that ever was done before— [*Spits*]
SMITH. A very notable design for a play, indeed.
BAYES. Instead of beginning with a scene that discovers something of the plot, I begin this with a whisper.
SMITH. That's very new.
BAYES. Come, take your seats. Begin, sirs.

Enter Gentleman-Usher *and* Physician

PHYSICIAN. Sir, by your habit, I should guess you to be the gentleman-usher of this sumptuous place.
USHER. And by your gait and fashion I should almost suspect you rule the healths of both our noble kings, under the notion of physician.
PHYSICIAN. You hit my function right.
USHER. And you, mine.
PHYSICIAN. Then let's embrace.
USHER. Come then.
PHYSICIAN. Come. [*They embrace*]

[1] rouge.

JOHNSON. Pray, sir, who are those two so very civil persons?

BAYES. Why, sir, the gentleman-usher and physician[1] of the two kings of Brentford.

JOHNSON. But how comes it to pass, then, that they know one another no better?

BAYES. Phoo! that's for the better carrying on of the intrigue.

JOHNSON. Very well.

PHYSICIAN. Sir, to conclude,

SMITH. What, before he begins?

BAYES. No, sir; you must know they had been talking of this a pretty while without.

SMITH. Where? In the tiring-room?

BAYES. Why aye, sir.—He's so dull!—Come, speak again.

PHYSICIAN. Sir, to conclude, the place you fill has more than amply exacted the talents of a wary pilot, and all these threat'ning storms which, like impregnant clouds, do hover o'er our heads, (when they once are grasped but by the eye of reason) melt into fruitful showers of blessings on the people.

BAYES. Pray, mark that allegory. Is not that good?

JOHNSON. Yes; that grasping of a storm with the eye is admirable.

PHYSICIAN. But yet some rumors great are stirring; and if Lorenzo should prove false (as none but the great gods can tell), you then perhaps would find that— [*Whispers*]

BAYES. Now they whisper.

USHER. Alone, do you say?

PHYSICIAN. No; attended with the noble— [*Whispers*]

USHER. Who—he in gray?

PHYSICIAN. Yes; and at the head of— [*Whispers*]

BAYES. —Pray, mark.

USHER. Then, sir, most certain, 'twill in time appear
These are the reasons that induced 'em to't.
First, he— [*Whispers*]

BAYES. Now t'other whispers.

USHER. Secondly, they— [*Whispers*]

BAYES. He's at it still.

USHER. Thirdly and lastly, both he and they— [*Whispers*]

BAYES. There they both whisper.
[*Exeunt whispering*]
—Now, gentlemen, pray tell me true and without flattery, is not this a very odd beginning of a play?

JOHNSON. In troth, I think it is, sir. But why two kings of the same place?

BAYES. Why? because it's new, and that's it I aim at. I despise your Jonson and Beaumont, that borrowed all they writ from nature: I am for fetching it purely out of my own fancy, I.

SMITH. But what think you of Sir John Suckling, sir?

BAYES. By gad, I am a better poet than he.

SMITH. Well, sir; but pray, why all this whispering?

BAYES. Why, sir (besides that it is new, as I told you before), because they are supposed to be politicians, and matters of state ought not to be divulged.

SMITH. But then, sir, why—

BAYES. Sir, if you'll but respite your curiosity till the end of the fifth act, you'll find it a piece of patience not ill recompensed. [*Goes to the door*]

JOHNSON. How dost thou like this, Frank? Is it not just as I told thee?

SMITH. Why, I did never, before this, see anything in nature, and all that (as Mr. Bayes says), so foolish but I could give some guess at what moved the fop to do it; but this, I confess, does go beyond my reach.

JOHNSON. Why, 'tis all alike: Mr. Wintershall[1] has informed me of this play before. And I'll tell thee, Frank, thou shalt not see one scene here that either properly ought to come in, or is like anything thou canst imagine has ever been the practice of the world. And then, when he comes to what he calls "good language," it is, as I told

1 Q1 *physicians.*

1 Q1 *Wintershull.*

thee, very fantastical, most abominably dull, and not one word to the purpose.

SMITH. It does surprise me, I am sure, very much.

JOHNSON. Aye, but it won't do so long; by that time thou hast seen a play or two that I'll show thee, thou wilt be pretty well acquainted with this new kind of foppery.

SCENE II

Enter the two Kings, *hand in hand*

BAYES. These are the two kings of Brentford. Take notice of their style: 'twas never yet upon the stage; but, if you like it, I could make a shift, perhaps, to show you a whole play, written all just so.

1ST KING. Did you observe their whisper, brother king?
2D KING. I did; and heard besides a grave bird sing
That they intend, sweetheart, to play us pranks.

BAYES. This, now, is familiar, because they are both persons of the same quality.

SMITH. 'Sdeath, this would make a man spew.

1ST KING. If that design appears,
I'll lug 'em by the ears
Until I make 'em crack.
2D KING. And so will I, i'fack.
1ST KING. You must begin, *mon foy*.[1]
2D KING. Sweet sir, *pardonnes moy*.

BAYES. Mark that: I makes 'em both speak French to show their breeding.

JOHNSON. Oh, 'tis extraordinary fine.

2D KING. Then, spite of Fate, we'll thus combinèd stand;
And, like true brothers, walk still hand in hand.
[*Exeunt*]

JOHNSON. This is a very majestic scene indeed.

BAYES. Aye, 'tis a crust, a lasting crust for your rogue critics, I gad. I would fain see the proudest of 'em all but dare to nibble at this; I gad, if they do, this shall rub their gums for 'em, I promise you. It was I, you must know, writ the play I told you of, in this very style. And shall I tell you a very good jest? I gad, the players would not act it. Ha, ha, ha!

SMITH. That's impossible.

BAYES. I gad, they would not, sir—ha, ha, ha! They refused it, I gad, the silly rogues: ha, ha, ha.

JOHNSON. Fie, that was rude.

BAYES. Rude! I gad, they are the rudest, uncivilest persons, and all that, in the whole world: I gad, there's no living with 'em. I have written, Mr. Johnson, I do verily believe, a whole cart-load of things, every whit as good as this; and yet, I vow to gad, these insolent rascals have turned 'em all back upon my hands again.

JOHNSON. Strange fellows, indeed.

SMITH. But pray, Mr. Bayes, how came these two kings to know of this whisper? for, as I remember, they were not present at it.

BAYES. No, but that's the actors' fault, and not mine; for the kings should (a pox take 'em) have popped both their heads in at the door just as the other went off.

SMITH. That, indeed, would ha' done it.

BAYES. Done it! Aye, I gad, these fellows are able to spoil the best things in christendom. I'll tell you, Mr. Johnson, I vow to gad, I have been so highly disobliged by the peremptoriness of these fellows, that I am resolved hereafter to bend all my thoughts for the service of the Nursery, and mump your proud players, I gad.

SCENE III

Enter PRINCE PRETTY-MAN

PRETTY-MAN. How strange a captive am I grown of late!
Shall I accuse my love, or blame my fate?
My love, I cannot; that is too divine:
And against Fate what mortal dares repine?

Enter CLORIS

—But here she comes.
Sure 'tis some blazing comet, is it not?
[*Lies down*]

[1] An intentional error.

BAYES. Blazing comet! mark that. I gad, very fine.

PRETTY-MAN. But I am so surprised with sleep I cannot speak the rest. [*Sleeps*]

BAYES. Does not that, now, surprise you, to fall asleep just in the nick? His spirits exhale with the heat of his passion, and all that, and—swop! falls asleep, as you see. Now here she must make a simile.

SMITH. Where's the necessity of that, Mr. Bayes?

BAYES. Because she's surprised. That's a general rule: you must ever make a simile when you are surprised; 'tis the new way of writing.

CLORIS. As some tall Pine, which we, on Ætna, find
T'have stood the rage of many a boist'rous wind,
Feeling without, that flames within do play
Which would consume his root and sap away,
He spreads his worsted arms unto the skies,
Silently grieves, all pale, repines and dies:
So, shrouded up, your bright eye disappears;
Break forth, bright scorching Sun, and dry my tears. [*Exit*]

BAYES. I am afraid, gentlemen, this scene has made you sad; for I must confess, when I writ it, I wept myself.

SMITH. No, truly, sir, my spirits are almost exhaled too, and I am likelier to fall asleep.

[PRINCE PRETTY-MAN *starts up, and says*]
PRETTY-MAN. It is resolved. [*Exit*]

SMITH. Mr. Bayes, may one be so bold as to ask you a question now, and you not be angry?

BAYES. O Lord, sir, you may ask me what you please. I vow to gad, you do me a great deal of honor: you do not know me if you say that, sir.

SMITH. Then, pray, sir, what is it that this prince here has resolved in his sleep?

BAYES. Why, I must confess, that question is well enough asked for one that is not acquainted with this new way of writing. But you must know, sir, that, to outdo all my fellow-writers, whereas they keep their *intrigo* secret till the very last scene before the dance, I now, sir, do you mark me—a—

SMITH. Begin the play and end it, without ever opening the plot at all?

BAYES. I do so; that's the very plain troth on't. Ha, ha, ha! I do, I gad. If they cannot find it out themselves, e'en let 'em alone for Bayes, I warrant you.—But here, now, is a scene of business. Pray observe it, for I dare say you'll think it no unwise discourse this, nor ill argued. To tell you true, 'tis a debate I overheard once betwixt two grand, sober, governing persons.

SCENE IV

Enter Gentleman-Usher *and* Physician

USHER. Come, sir; let's state the matter of fact, and lay our heads together.

PHYSICIAN. Right! lay our heads together. I love to be merry sometimes; but when a knotty point comes, I lay my head close to it, with a pipe of tobacco in my mouth, and then I whew it away, i'faith.

BAYES. I do just so, I gad, always.

USHER. The grand question is, whether they heard us whisper; which I divide thus: into when they heard, what they heard, and whether they heard or no.

JOHNSON. Most admirably divided, I swear.

USHER. As to the when, you say just now; so that is answered. Then, for what. Why, what answers itself; for what could they hear but what we talked of? So that naturally and of necessity we come to the last question, *videlicet,* whether they heard or no.

SMITH. This is a very wise scene, Mr. Bayes.

BAYES. Yes, you have it right. They are both politicians. I writ this scene for a pattern, to show the world how men should talk of business.

JOHNSON. You have done it exceeding well, indeed.

BAYES. Yes, I think this will do.

PHYSICIAN. Well, if they heard us whisper, they'll turn us out, and nobody else will take us.
USHER. Nobody else will take us.

SMITH. Not for politicians, I dare answer for it.

PHYSICIAN. Let's then no more ourselves in vain bemoan;
We are not safe until we them unthrone.
USHER. 'Tis right.
And, since occasion now seems debonair,
I'll seize on this, and you shall take that chair.
[*They draw their swords, and sit down in the two great chairs upon the stage*]

BAYES. There's now an odd surprise; the whole state's turn'd quite topsy-turvy, without any puther or stir in the whole world, I gad.
JOHNSON. A very silent change of government, truly, as ever I heard of.
BAYES. It is so. And yet you shall see me bring 'em in again, by and by, in as odd a way every jot.
[*The* Usurpers *march out flourishing their swords*]

Enter SHIRLEY

SHIRLEY. Hey ho, hey ho! what a change is here! Hey day, hey day! I know not what to do, nor what to say. [*Exit*]
SMITH. But pray, sir, how came they to depose the kings so easily?
BAYES. Why, sir, you must know, they long had a design to do it before, but never could put it in practice till now; and, to tell you true, that's one reason why I made 'em whisper so at first.
SMITH. Oh, very well: now I'm fully satisfied.
BAYES. And then, to show you, sir, it was not done so very easily neither, in this next scene you shall see some fighting.
SMITH. Oh, ho! so then you make the struggle to be after the business is done?
BAYES. Aye.
SMITH. Oh, I conceive you. That is very natural.

SCENE V

Enter four men at one door, and four at another, with their swords drawn

1ST SOLDIER. Stand! Who goes there?
2D SOLDIER. A friend.
1ST SOLDIER. What friend?
2D SOLDIER. A friend to the house.
1ST SOLDIER. Fall on!
[*They all kill one another. Music strikes*]

BAYES. [*To the music*] Hold, hold! [*It ceaseth*] Now, here's an odd surprise: all these dead men you shall see rise up presently, at a certain note that I have made, in *Effaut*[1] *flat*, and fall a-dancing. Do you hear, dead men? [*To the music*] Remember your note in *Effaut flat*. Play on.—Now, now, now!
[*The music play his note, and the dead men rise but cannot get in order*]
—O Lord, O Lord!—Out, out, out!—Did ever men spoil a good thing so? no figure, no ear, no time, nothing! You dance worse than the angels in *Harry the Eight*, or the fat spirits in *The Tempest*, I gad.
1ST SOLDIER. Why, sir, 'tis impossible to do anything in time, to this tune.
BAYES. O Lord, O Lord! Impossible? why, gentlemen, if there be any faith in a person that's a Christian, I sate up two whole nights in composing this air and apting it for the business. For, if you observe, there are two several designs in this tune; it begins swift, and ends slow. You talk of time, and time; you shall see me do't. Look you now. [*Lies down flat on his face*] Here I am dead. Now mark my note in *Effaut flat*.—Strike up music. Now.
[*As he rises up hastily, he tumbles and falls down again*]
—Ah, gadsookers! I have broke my nose.
JOHNSON. By my troth, Mr. Bayes, this is a very unfortunate note of yours, in *Effaut flat*.
BAYES. A plague of this damned stage, with your nails and your tenter-hooks, that a man cannot come to teach you to act but he must break his nose, and his face,

[1] The note F.

and the divel and all. Pray, sir, can you help me to a wet piece of brown paper? 41

SMITH. No indeed, sir; I don't usually carry any about me.

2D SOLDIER. Sir, I'll go get you some within presently. 45

BAYES. Go, go then; I'll follow you. Pray, dance out the dance, and I'll be with you in a moment. Remember, you four, that you dance like horsemen. 49

[*Exit* BAYES]

[*They dance the dance, but can make nothing of it*]

1ST SOLDIER. A devil! let's try this no more. Play my dance that Mr. Bayes found fault with.

[*Dance, and exeunt*]

SMITH. What can this fool be doing all this while about his nose? 54

JOHNSON. Prithee, let's go see. [*Exeunt*]

ACT III

SCENE I

Enter BAYES *with a paper on his nose, and the two gentlemen*

BAYES. Now, sir, this I do because my fancy in this play is to end every act with a dance.

SMITH. Faith, that fancy is very good, but I should hardly have broke my nose for it, though. 6

JOHNSON. That fancy, I suppose, is new too.

BAYES. Sir, all my fancies are so. I tread upon no man's heels, but make my flight upon my own wings, I assure you. As now, this next scene some perhaps will say, It is not very necessary to the plot. I grant it; what then? I meant it so. But then, it's as full of drollery as ever it can hold: 'tis like an orange stuck with cloves as for conceit.—Come, where are you? This scene will make you die with laughing if it be well acted; it is a scene of sheer wit, without any mixture in the world, I gad. 20

[*Reads*]

Enter PRINCE PRETTY-MAN *and* TOM THIMBLE, *his tailor*

This, sirs, might properly enough be called a prize of wit; for you shall see 'em come in upon one another snip snap, hit for hit, as fast as can be. First one speaks, then presently t'other's upon him—slap! with a repartee; then he at him again—dash! with a new conceit, and so eternally, eternally, I gad, till they go quite off the stage. 28

[*Goes to call the* Players]

SMITH. What a plague does this fop mean by his snip snap, hit for hit, and dash?

JOHNSON. Mean? why, he never meant anything in's life. What dost talk of meaning for?

Enter BAYES

BAYES. Why don't you come in?

Enter PRINCE PRETTY-MAN *and* TOM THIMBLE

PRETTY-MAN. But prithee, Tom Thimble, why wilt thou needs marry? If nine tailors make but one man, and one woman cannot be satisfied with nine men, what work art thou cutting out here for thyself, trow we? 38

BAYES. Good!

THIMBLE. Why, an't please your Highness, if I can't make up all the work I cut out, I shan't want journeymen to help me, I warrant you.

BAYES. Good again. 43

PRETTY-MAN. I am afraid thy journeymen, though, Tom, won't work by the day, but by the night.

BAYES. Good still. 47

THIMBLE. However, if my wife sits but cross-legg'd, as I do, there will be no great danger—not half so much as when I trusted you for your Coronation suit.

BAYES. Very good, i'faith. 52

PRETTY-MAN. Why, the times then lived upon trust; it was the fashion. You would not be out of time, at such a time as that, sure. A tailor, you know, must never be out of fashion.

BAYES. Right. 57

THIMBLE. I'm sure, sir, I made your cloth in the Court fashion, for you never paid me yet.

BAYES. There's a bob for the Court.

PRETTY-MAN. Why, Tom, thou art a sharp rogue when thou art angry, I see: thou pay'st me now, methinks.

THIMBLE. Aye, sir, in your own coin; you give me nothing but words.

BAYES. Admirable, before gad.

PRETTY-MAN. Well, Tom, I hope shortly I shall have another coin for thee; for now the wars come on, I shall grow to be a man of mettle.

BAYES. Oh, you did not do that half enough.

JOHNSON. Methinks he does it admirably.

BAYES. Aye, pretty well, but he does not hit me in't. He does not top his part.

THIMBLE. That's the way to be stamped yourself, sir. I shall see you come home, like an angel for the king's evil, with a hole bored through you. [*Exeunt*]

BAYES. That's very good, i'faith; ha, ha, ha! Ha, there he has hit it up to the hilts, I gad. How do you like it now, gentlemen? is not this pure wit?

SMITH. 'Tis "snip snap," sir, as you say, but methinks not pleasant nor to the purpose, for the play does not go on.

BAYES. Play does not go on? I don't know what you mean; why, is not this part of the play?

SMITH. Yes, but the plot stands still.

BAYES. Plot stand still! why, what a devil is the plot good for but to bring in fine things?

SMITH. Oh, I did not know that before.

BAYES. No, I think you did not—nor many things more that I am master of. Now, sir, I gad, this is the bane of all us writers: let us soar never so little above the common pitch, I gad, all's spoiled; for the vulgar never understand us. They can never conceive you, sir, the excellency of these things.

JOHNSON. 'Tis a sad fate, I must confess. But you write on still?

BAYES. Write on? I gad, I warrant you. 'Tis not their talk shall stop me; if they catch me at that lock, I'll give 'em leave to hang me. As long as I know my things to be good, what care I what they say?—What, they are gone, and forgot the song!

SMITH. They have done very well, methinks; here's no need of one.

BAYES. Alack, sir, you know nothing. You must ever interlard your plays with songs, ghosts and idols if you mean to—a—

JOHNSON. Pit, box and gallery, Mr. Bayes.

BAYES. I gad, sir, and you have nicked it. Hark you, Mr. Johnson, you know I don't flatter; I gad, you have a great deal of wit.

JOHNSON. O Lord, sir, you do me too much honor.

BAYES. Nay, nay, come, come, Mr. Johnson, 'ifacks this must not be said amongst us that have it. I know you have wit by the judgment you make of this play—for that's the measure I go by; my play is my touchstone. When a man tells me such a one is a person of parts, "Is he so?" say I. What do I do but bring him presently to see this play. If he likes it, I know what to think of him; if not, "your most humble servant, sir, I'll no more of him upon my word; I thank you." I am *clara voyant*, I gad. Now, here we go on to our business.

SCENE II

Enter the two Usurpers, *hand in hand*

USHER. But what's become of Volscius the great?
His presence has not graced our court of late.

PHYSICIAN. I fear some ill, from emulation sprung,
Has from us that illustrious hero wrung.

BAYES. Is not that majestical?

SMITH. Yes, but who a devil is that Volscius?

BAYES. Why, that's a prince I make in love with Parthenope.

SMITH. I thank you, sir.

Enter CORDELIO

CORDELIO. My lieges, news from Volscius the Prince.

USHER. His news is welcome, whatsoe'er it be.

SMITH. How, sir, do you mean that—whether it be good or bad?

BAYES. Nay, pray, sir, have a little patience! Godsookers, you'll spoil all my play! Why, sir, 'tis impossible to answer every impertinent question you ask.

SMITH. Cry you mercy, sir.

CORDELIO. His highness, sirs, commanded me to tell you
That the fair person whom you both do know,
Despairing of forgiveness for her fault,
In a deep sorrow, twice she did attempt
Upon her precious life; but, by the care
Of standers-by, prevented was.

SMITH. 'Sheart, what stuff 's here!

CORDELIO. At last,
Volscius the great this dire resolve embraced:
His servants he into the country sent,
And he himself to Piccadillé went;
Where he's informed, by letters, that she's dead!

USHER. Dead! Is that possible? Dead!

PHYSICIAN. O ye gods! [*Exeunt*]

BAYES. There's a smart expression of a passion—O ye gods! That's one of my bold strokes, I gad.

SMITH. Yes, but who is the fair person that's dead?

BAYES. That you shall know anon.

SMITH. Nay, if we know it at all, 'tis well enough.

BAYES. Perhaps you may find too, by and by, for all this, that she's not dead neither.

SMITH. Marry, that's good news. I am glad of that with all my heart.

BAYES. Now, here's the man brought in that is supposed to have killed her.

[*A great shout within*]

Enter AMARYLLIS *with a book in her hand, and* Attendants

AMARYLLIS. What shout triumphant's that?

Enter a Soldier

SOLDIER. Shy maid, upon the river brink, near Twick'nam Town, the assassinate is tane.

AMARYLLIS. Thanks to the powers above for this deliverance!
I hope its slow beginning will portend
A forward exit to all future end.

BAYES. Pish, there you are out! To all future end? No, no—to all future *end*: you must lay the accent upon "end," or else you lose the conceit.

JOHNSON. Indeed the alteration of that accent does a great deal, Mr. Bayes.

BAYES. Oh, all in all, sir; they are these little things that mar or set you off a play.

SMITH. I see you are perfect in these matters.

BAYES. Aye, sir; I have been long enough at it to know something.

Enter Soldiers *dragging in an old* Fisherman

AMARYLLIS. Villain, what monster did corrupt thy mind
T'attack the noblest soul of human kind?
Tell me who set thee on.

FISHERMAN. Prince Pretty-man.

AMARYLLIS. To kill whom?

FISHERMAN. Prince Pretty-man.

AMARYLLIS. What, did Prince Pretty-man hire you to kill Prince Pretty-man?

FISHERMAN. No; Prince Volscius.

AMARYLLIS. To kill whom?

FISHERMAN. Prince Volscius.

AMARYLLIS. What, did Prince Volscius hire you to kill Prince Volscius?

FISHERMAN. No; Prince Pretty-man.

AMARYLLIS. So!—drag him hence.
Till torture of the rack produce his sense.

[*Exeunt* Soldiers *and* Captive]

BAYES. Mark how I make the horror of his guilt confound his intellects—for that's the design of this scene.

SMITH. I see, sir, you have a several design for every scene.

BAYES. Aye: that's my way of writing, and so I can dispatch you, sir, a whole play, before another man, I gad, can make an end of his plot. So, now enter Prince Pretty-man in a rage.—Where the devil is he? [*Calls*] Why Pretty-man! why when,[1] I say? Oh, fie, fie, fie, fie! all's marred—I vow to gad, quite marred.

Enter PRETTY-MAN

—Phoo, pox! you are come too late, sir; now you may go out again if you please.

1 Exclamatory, showing impatience.

I vow to gad Mr.—a—I would not give a button for my play, now you have done this.

PRETTY-MAN. What, sir?

BAYES. What, sir? 'Slife, sir, you should have come out in choler, rous[1] upon the stage just as the other went off. Must a man be eternally telling you of these things?

JOHNSON. [*Aside*] Sure this must be some very notable matter that he 's so angry at.

SMITH. I am not of your opinion.

BAYES. Pish! come, let's hear your part, sir.

PRETTY-MAN. Bring in my father; why d'ye keep him from me?
Although a fisherman, he is my father.
Was ever son yet brought to this distress,
To be, for being a son, made fatherless?
Oh, you just gods, rob me not of a father.
The being of a son take from me rather.
[*Exit*]

SMITH. Well, Ned, what think you now?

JOHNSON. A devil, this is worst of all.—Pray, Mr. Bayes, what's the meaning of this scene?

BAYES. Oh, cry you mercy, sir: I purtest I had forgot to tell you. Why, sir, you must know that long before the beginning of this play, this prince was taken by a fisherman.

SMITH. How, sir—taken prisoner?

BAYES. Taken prisoner! O Lord, what a question's there! did ever any man ask such a question? Taken prisoner! Godsookers, he has put the plot quite out of my head, with this damned question. What was I going to say?

JOHNSON. Nay, the Lord knows; I cannot imagine.

BAYES. Stay, let me see—taken. Oh, 'tis true. Why, sir, as I was going to say, his Highness here, the prince, was taken in a cradle by a fisherman and brought up as his child.

SMITH. Indeed!

BAYES. Nay, prithee, hold thy peace.—And so, sir, this murder being committed by the riverside, the fisherman, upon suspicion, was seized, and thereupon the prince grew angry.

SMITH. So, so! now 'tis very plain.

[1] with a bounce.

JOHNSON. But, Mr. Bayes, is not that some disparagement to a prince, to pass for a fisherman's son? Have a care of that, I pray.

BAYES. No, no, no—not at all, for 'tis but for a while. I shall fetch him off again presently, you shall see.

Enter PRETTY-MAN *and* THIMBLE

PRETTY-MAN. By all the gods, I'll set the world on fire
Rather than let 'em ravish hence my sire.

THIMBLE. Brave Pretty-man, it is at length revealed
That he is not thy sire who thee concealed.

BAYES. Lo' you now! there he's off again.

JOHNSON. Admirably done, i'faith.

BAYES. Aye, now the plot thickens very much upon us.

PRETTY-MAN. What oracle this darkness can evince?
Sometimes a fisher's son, sometimes a prince.
It is a secret, great as is the world;
In which, I, like the soul, am tossed and hurled.
The blackest ink of Fate, sure, was my lot,
And when she writ my name she made a blot.
[*Exit*]

BAYES. There 's a blust'ring verse for you now.

SMITH. Yes sir; but pray, why is he so mightily troubled to find he is not a fisherman's son?

BAYES. Phoo! that is not because he has a mind to be his son, but for fear he should be thought to be nobody's son at all.

SMITH. Aye, that would trouble a man, indeed.

BAYES. So; let me see. [*Reading*] Enter Prince Volscius, going out of town.

SMITH. I thought he had been gone to Piccadillé.

BAYES. Yes, he gave out so; but that was only to cover his design.

JOHNSON. What design?

BAYES. Why, to head the army that lies concealed for him in Knightsbridge.

JOHNSON. I see here is a great deal of plot, Mr. Bayes.

BAYES. Yes, now it begins to break, but we shall have a world of more business anon.

Enter PRINCE VOLSCIUS, CLORIS, AMARYLLIS, *and* HARRY *with a riding-cloak and boots*

AMARYLLIS. Sir, you are cruel, thus to leave the town and to retire to country solitude.

CLORIS. We hoped this summer that we should at least have held the honor of your company.

BAYES. Held the honor of your company! prettily exprest!—Held the honor of your company! Godsookers, these fellows will never take notice of anything.

JOHNSON. I assure you, sir, I admire it extremely; I don't know what he does.

BAYES. Aye, aye, he's a little envious, but 'tis no great matter.—Come!

AMARYLLIS. Pray, let us two this single boon obtain,
That you will here with poor us still remain.
Before your horses come, pronounce our fate;
For then, alas, I fear 'twill be too late.

BAYES. Sad!

VOLSCIUS. Harry, my boots; for I'll go rage among
My blades encamped, and quit this urban throng.

SMITH. But pray, Mr. Bayes, is not this a little difficult, that you were saying e'en now, to keep an army thus concealed in Knightsbridge?

BAYES. In Knightsbridge?—stay.

JOHNSON. No, not if the innkeepers be his friends.

BAYES. His friends! Aye, sir, his intimate acquaintance; or else, indeed, I grant it could not be.

SMITH. Yes, faith, so it might be very easily.

BAYES. Nay, if I do not make all things easy, I gad, I'll give you leave to hang me. Now you would think that he is going out of town, but you shall see how prettily I have contrived to stop him presently.

SMITH. By my troth, sir, you have so amazed me, I know not what to think.

Enter PARTHENOPE

VOLSCIUS. Bless me! how frail are all my best resolves!
How, in a moment, is my purpose changed!
Too soon I thought myself secure from love.
Fair madam, give me leave to ask her name
Who does so gently rob me of my fame:
For I should meet the army out of town,
And, if I fail, must hazard my renown.

PARTHENOPE. My mother, sir, sells ale by the town walls,
And me her "dear Parthenope" she calls.

VOLSCIUS. Can vulgar vestments high-born beauty shroud?
Thou bring'st the morning pictured in a cloud.

BAYES. The morning pictured in a cloud!
A gadsookers, what a conceit is there!

PARTHENOPE. Give you good ev'n, sir. [*Exit*]

VOLSCIUS. O inauspicious stars! that I was born
To sudden love and to more sudden scorn!

AMARYLLIS. Cloris—How! Prince Volscius in love? Ha, ha, ha. [*Exeunt laughing*]

SMITH. Sure, Mr. Bayes, we have lost some jest here that they laugh at so.

BAYES. Why did you not observe? He first resolves to go out of town, and then, as he is pulling on his boots, falls in love.—Ha, ha, ha!

SMITH. Oh, I did not observe; that, indeed, is a very good jest.

BAYES. Here, now, you shall see a combat betwixt love and honor. An ancient author has made a whole play on't, but I have dispatched it all in this scene.

[VOLSCIUS *sits down*]

VOLSCIUS. How has my passion made me Cupid's scoff!
This hasty boot is on, the other off,
And sullen lies, with amorous design
To quit loud fame and make that beauty mine.
My legs, the emblem of my various thought,
Show to what sad distraction I am brought.
Sometimes with stubborn honor, like this boot,
My mind is guarded, and resolved to do't;
Sometimes again, that very mind, by love
Disarmèd, like this other leg does prove.

JOHNSON. What pains Mr. Bayes takes to act this speech himself!

SMITH. Aye, the fool, I see, is mightily transported with it.

VOLSCIUS. Shall I to Honor or to Love give way?

"Go on," cries Honor; tender Love says, "Nay."
Honor, aloud, commands, "Pluck both boots on";
But softer Love does whisper, "Put on none."
What shall I do? what conduct shall I find
To lead me through this twilight of my mind?
For as bright Day, with black approach of Night
Contending, makes a doubtful, puzzling light,
So does my Honor and my Love together
Puzzle me so, I can resolve for neither.
[*Exit with one boot on and the other off*]

JOHNSON. By my troth, sir, this is as difficult a combat as ever I saw, and as equal; for 'tis determined on neither side.

BAYES. Aye, is't not, I gad?—ha! For, to go off hip hop, hip hop, upon this occasion, is a thousand times better than any conclusion in the world, I gad. But, sirs, you cannot make any judgment of this play, because we are come but to the end of the second act.—Come, the dance.

Enter Dancers *and dance*

Well, gentlemen, you'll see this dance, if I am not mistaken, take very well upon the stage when they are perfect in their motions and all that.

SMITH. I don't know 'twill take, sir, but I am sure you sweat hard for't.

BAYES. Aye, sir, it costs me more pains and trouble to do these things than almost the things are worth.

SMITH. By my troth, I think so, sir.

BAYES. Not for the things themselves, for I could write you, sir, forty of 'em in a day; but I gad, these players are such dull persons, that if a man be not by upon every point and at every turn, I gad, they'll mistake you, sir, and spoil all.

Enter a Player

—What, is the funeral ready?

PLAYER. Yes, sir.

BAYES. And is the lance filled with wine?

PLAYER. Sir, 'tis just now a-doing.

BAYES. Stay, then; I'll do it myself.

SMITH. Come, let's go with him.

BAYES. A match. But Mr. Johnson, I gad, I am not like other persons; they care not what becomes of their things, so they can but get money for 'em: now, I gad, when I write, if it be not just as it should be, in every circumstance, to every particular, I gad, I am not able to endure it. I am not myself; I'm out of my wits, and all that: I'm the strangest person in the whole world. For what care I for my money? I gad, I write for fame and reputation. [*Exeunt*]

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter BAYES *and the two* Gentlemen

BAYES. Gentlemen, because I would not have any two things alike in this play, the last act beginning with a witty scene of mirth, I make this to begin with a funeral.

SMITH. And is that all your reason for it, Mr. Bayes?

BAYES. No, sir; I have a precedent for it too. A person of honor, and a scholar, brought in his funeral just so: and he was one (let me tell you) that knew as well what belonged to a funeral as any man in England, I gad.

JOHNSON. Nay, if that be so, you are safe.

BAYES. I gad, but I have another device—a frolic, which I think yet better than all this—not for the plot or characters (for in my heroic plays I make no difference as to those matters), but for another contrivance.

SMITH. What is that, I pray?

BAYES. Why, I have designed a conquest, that cannot possibly, I gad, be acted in less than a whole week: and I'll speak a bold word, it shall drum, trumpet, shout and battle, I gad, with any the most warlike tragedy we have, either ancient or modern.

JOHNSON. Aye, marry, sir; there you say something.

SMITH. And pray, sir, how have you ordered this same frolic of yours?

BAYES. Faith, sir, by the rule of romance. For example, they divide their things into three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or as many tomes as they please; now, I would very

fain know what should hinder me from doing the same with my things if I please.

JOHNSON. Nay, if you should not be master of your own works, 'tis very hard.

BAYES. That is my sense. And therefore, sir, whereas every one makes five acts to one play, what do me I but make five plays to one plot, by which means the auditors have every day a new thing.

JOHNSON. Most admirably good, i'faith! and must certainly take, because it is not tedious.

BAYES. Aye, sir, I know that; there's the main point. And then, upon Saturday, to make a close of all (for I ever begin upon a Monday), I make you, sir, a sixth play, that sums up the whole matter to 'em, and all that, for fear they should have forgot it.

JOHNSON. That consideration, Mr. Bayes, indeed, I think, will be very necessary.

SMITH. And when comes in your share, pray, sir?

BAYES. The third week.

JOHNSON. I vow, you'll get a world of money.

BAYES. Why, faith, a man must live; and if you don't thus pitch upon some new device, I gad, you'll never do it; for this age (take it o' my word) is somewhat hard to please. There is one pretty, odd passage in the last of these plays, which may be executed two[1] several ways, wherein I'ld have your opinion, gentlemen.

JOHNSON. Well, what is't?

BAYES. Why, sir, I make a male person to be in love with a female.

SMITH. Do you mean that, Mr. Bayes, for a new thing?

BAYES. Yes, sir, as I have ordered it. You shall hear. He having passionately loved her through my five whole plays, finding at last that she consents to his love, just after that his mother had appeared to him like a ghost, he kills himself. That's one way. The other is, that she coming at last to love him with as violent a passion as he loved her, she kills herself. Now my question is, Which of these two persons should suffer upon this occasion?

JOHNSON. By my troth, it is a very hard case to decide.

BAYES. The hardest in the world, I gad; and has puzzled this pate very much. What say you, Mr. Smith?

SMITH. Why, truly, Mr. Bayes, if it might stand with your justice, I should now spare 'em both.

BAYES. I gad, and I think—ha—why then, I'll make him hinder her from killing herself. Aye, it shall be so.—Come, come, bring in the funeral.

Enter a Funeral, with the two Usurpers *and* Attendants

Lay it down there—no, here, sir.—So; now speak.

KING USHER. Set down the funeral pile, and let our grief
Receive from its embraces some relief.

KING PHYSICIAN. Was't not unjust to ravish hence her breath,
And in life's stead to leave us nought but death?
The world discovers now its emptiness,
And by her loss demonstrates we have less.

BAYES. Is not that good language, now? is not that elevate? It's my *non ultra*, I gad. You must know they were both in love with her.

SMITH. With her?—with whom?

BAYES. Why, this is Lardella's Funeral.

SMITH. Lardella! Aye, who is she?

BAYES. Why, sir, the sister of Drawcansir.—A lady that was drowned at sea and had a wave for her winding-sheet.

KING USHER. Lardella, O Lardella, from above
Behold the tragic issue of our love.
Pity us sinking under grief and pain,
For thy being cast away upon the main.

BAYES. Look you now, you see I told you true.

SMITH. Aye, sir, and I thank you for it, very kindly.

BAYES. Aye, I gad, but you will not have patience; honest Mr.—a—you will not have patience.

[1] Q1 *to.*

JOHNSON. Pray, Mr. Bayes, who is that Drawcansir?

BAYES. Why, sir, a fierce hero that frights his mistress, snubs up kings, baffles armies, and does what he will, without regard to good manners, justice, or numbers.

JOHNSON. A very pretty character.

SMITH. But, Mr. Bayes, I thought your heroes had ever been men of great humanity and justice.

BAYES. Yes, they have been so; but, for my part, I prefer that one quality of singly beating of whole armies above all your moral virtues put together, I gad. You shall see him come in presently. [*To the* Players] —Zookers, why don't you read the paper?

KING PHYSICIAN. Oh, cry you mercy. [*Goes to take the paper*]

BAYES. Pish!—nay, you are such a fumbler. Come, I'll read it myself. [*Takes a paper from off the coffin*]—Stay, it's an ill hand; I must use my spectacles. This, now, is a copy of verses which I make Lardella compose just as she is dying with design to have it pinned on her coffin, and so read by one of the usurpers, who is her cousin.

SMITH. A very shrewd design that, upon my word, Mr. Bayes.

BAYES. And what do you think I fancy her to make love like here in the paper?

SMITH. Like a woman. What should she make love like?

BAYES. O' my word you are out though, sir; I gad, you are.

SMITH. What then—like a man?

BAYES. No, sir, like a humble bee.

SMITH. I confess, that I should not have fancied.

BAYES. It may be so, sir. But it is, though, in order to the opinion of some of your ancient philosophers who held the transmigration of the soul.

SMITH. Very fine.

BAYES. I'll read the title: "To my dear Couz, King Physician."

SMITH. That's a little too familiar with a king though, sir, by your favor, for a humble bee.

BAYES. Mr. Smith, for other things I grant your knowledge may be above me; but as for Poetry, give me leave to say, I understand that better. It has been longer my practice; it has indeed, sir.

SMITH. Your servant, sir.

BAYES. Pray, mark it. [*Reads*]

Since death my earthly part will thus remove,
I'll come a humble bee to your chaste love.
With silent wings I'll follow you, dear couz;
Or else, before you, in the sun-beams buzz.
And when to melancholy groves you come,
An airy ghost, you'll know me by my hum;
For sound, being air, a ghost does well become.

SMITH. [*After a pause*] Admirable!

BAYES. At night into your bosom I will creep,
And buzz but softly if you chance to sleep;
Yet in your dreams I will pass sweeping by,
And then both hum and buzz before your eye.

JOHNSON. By my troth, that's a very great promise.

SMITH. Yes, and a most extraordinary comfort to boot.

BAYES. Your bed of love, from dangers I will free,
But most, from love of any future bee.
And when with pity your heart-strings shall crack,
With empty arms I'll bear you on my back.

SMITH. A pick-a-pack, a pick-a-pack.

BAYES. Aye, I gad, but is not that *tuant* now, ha? is it not *tuant*? Here's the end:

Then, at your birth of immortality,
Like any wingèd archer, hence I'll fly,
And teach you your first flutt'ring in the sky.

JOHNSON. Oh, rare! it is the most natural, refined fancy this, that ever I heard, I'll swear.

BAYES. Yes, I think for a dead person it is a good enough way of making love; for being divested of her terrestrial part, and all that, she is only capable of these little, pretty, amorous designs that are innocent, and yet passionate.—Come, draw your swords.

KING PHYSICIAN. Come sword, come sheath thyself within this breast,
That only in Lardella's tomb can rest.
KING USHER. Come, dagger, come, and penetrate this heart,
Which cannot from Lardella's love depart.

Enter PALLAS

PALLAS. Hold! stop your murd'ring hands
At Pallas's commands!
For the supposèd dead, O kings,
Forbear to act such deadly things.
Lardella lives: I did but try
If princes for their loves could die.
Such celestial constancy
Shall, by the gods, rewarded be;
And from these funeral obsequies
A nuptial banquet shall arise.
[*The coffin opens, and a banquet is discovered*]

BAYES. Now it's out. This is the very funeral of the fair person which Volscius sent word was dead, and Pallas, you see, has turned it into a banquet.

JOHNSON. By my troth, now, that is new, and more than I expected.

BAYES. Yes, I knew this would please you; for the chief art in poetry is to elevate your expectation and then bring you off some extraordinary way.

KING USHER. Resplendent Pallas, we in thee do find
The fiercest beauty and a fiercer mind:
And since to thee Lardella's life we owe,
We'll supple statues in thy temple grow.
KING PHYSICIAN. Well, since alive Lardella's found,
Let, in full bowls, her health go round.
[*The two* Usurpers *take each of them a bowl in their hands*]
KING USHER. But where's the wine?
PALLAS. That shall be mine.
Lo, from this conquering lance,
Does flow the purest wine of France;
[*Fills the bowls out of her lance*]
And, to appease your hunger, I
Have, in my helmet, brought a pie;
Lastly, to bear a part with these,
Behold a buckler made of cheese. [*Vanish* PALLAS]

Enter DRAWCANSIR

KING PHYSICIAN. What man is this that dares disturb our feast?
DRAWCANSIR. He that dares drink, and for that drink dares die;
And, knowing this, dares yet drink on, am I.

JOHNSON. That is as much as to say that though he would rather die than not drink, yet he would fain drink for all that too.
BAYES. Right; that's the conceit on't.
JOHNSON. 'Tis a marvellous good one, I swear.

KING USHER. Sir, if you please, we should be glad to know
How long you here will stay, how soon you'll go.

BAYES. Is not that now like a well-bred person, I gad?—so modest, so gent!
SMITH. Oh, very like.

DRAWCANSIR. You shall not know how long I here will stay;
But you shall know I'll take my bowls away.
[*Snatches the bowls out of the* King's *hands and drinks 'em off*]

SMITH. But, Mr. Bayes, is that, too, modest and gent?
BAYES. No, I gad, sir, but it's great.

KING USHER. Though, brother, this grum stranger be a clown,
He'll leave us, sure, a little to gulp down.
DRAWCANSIR. Whoe'er to gulp one drop of this dares think,
I'll stare away his very pow'r to drink.
[*The two* Kings *sneak off the stage, with their* Attendants]
I drink, I huff, I strut, look big and stare;
And all this I can do, because I dare.
[*Exit*]

SMITH. I suppose, Mr. Bayes, this is the fierce hero you spoke of.
BAYES. Yes, but this is nothing: you shall see him, in the last act, win above a dozen battles, one after another, I gad, as fast as they can possibly be represented.
JOHNSON. That will be a fight worth seeing, indeed.
SMITH. But pray, Mr. Bayes, why do you make the kings let him use 'em so scurvily?
BAYES. Phoo! that is to raise the character of Drawcansir.

JOHNSON. O' my word, that was well thought on.

BAYES. Now, sir, I'll show you a scene indeed; or rather, indeed the scene of scenes. 'Tis an heroic scene.

SMITH. And pray, sir, what is your design in this scene?

BAYES. Why, sir, my design is Roman clothes, gilded truncheons, forced conceit, smooth verse, and a rant; in fine, if this scene does not take, I gad, I'll write no more. Come, come in, Mr.—a—nay, come in as many as you can. Gentlemen, I must desire you to remove a little, for I must fill the stage.

SMITH. Why fill the stage?

BAYES. Oh, sir, because your heroic verse never sounds well but when the stage is full.

SCENE II

Enter PRINCE PRETTY-MAN *and* PRINCE VOLSCIUS

BAYES. Nay, hold, hold! pray, by your leave a little.—Look you, sir, the drift of this scene is somewhat more than ordinary, for I make 'em both fall out because they are not in love with the same woman.

SMITH. Not in love? you mean, I suppose, because they are in love. Mr. Bayes?

BAYES. No, sir; I say not in love. There's a new conceit for you. Now, speak.

PRETTY-MAN. Since fate, Prince Volscius, has found out the way
For our so longed-for meeting here this day,
Lend thy attention to my grand concern.

VOLSCIUS. I gladly would that story of thee learn;
But thou to love dost, Pretty-man, incline:
Yet love in thy breast is not love in mine.

BAYES. Antithesis!—thine and mine.

PRETTY-MAN. Since love itself's the same, why should it be
Diff'ring in you from what it is in me?

BAYES. Reasoning; I gad, I love reasoning in verse.

VOLSCIUS. Love takes, chameleon-like, a various dye
From every plant on which itself does lie.

BAYES. Simile!

PRETTY-MAN. Let not thy love the course of nature fright:
Nature does most in harmony delight.

VOLSCIUS. How weak a deity would nature prove
Contending with the pow'rful god of love?

BAYES. There's a great verse.

VOLSCIUS. If incense thou wilt offer at the shrine
Of mighty love, burn it to none but mine.
Her rosy lips external sweets exhale,
And her bright flames make all flames else look pale.

BAYES. I gad, that is right.

PRETTY-MAN. Perhaps dull incense may thy love suffice,
But mine must be adored with sacrifice.
All hearts turn ashes which her eyes control:
The body they consume as well as soul.

VOLSCIUS. My love has yet a power more divine;
Victims her altars burn not, but refine.
Amidst the flames they ne'er give up the ghost,
But with her looks revive still as they roast.
In spite of pain and death, they're kept alive;
Her fiery eyes makes 'em in fire survive.

BAYES. That is as well as I can do.

VOLSCIUS. Let my Parthenope at length prevail.

BAYES. Civil, I gad.

PRETTY-MAN. I'll sooner have a passion for a whale,
In whose vast bulk, though store of oil doth lie,
We find more shape, more beauty, in a fly.

SMITH. That's uncivil, I gad.

BAYES. Yes; but as far a fetched fancy though, I gad, as ever you saw.

VOLSCIUS. Soft! Pretty-man, let not thy vain pretence
Of perfect love defame love's excellence.
Parthenope is sure as far above
All other loves as above all is love.

BAYES. Ah! I gad, that strikes me.

PRETTY-MAN. To blame my Cloris, gods would not pretend.

BAYES. Now mark.

VOLSCIUS. Were all gods joined, they could not hope to mend
My better choice; for fair Parthenope
Gods would, themselves, un-god themselves to see.

BAYES. Now the rant's a-coming.

PRETTY-MAN. Durst any of the gods be so uncivil,
I'ld make that god subscribe himself a devil.

BAYES. Ah, godsookers, that's well writ!

VOLSCIUS. Couldst thou that god from heav'n to earth translate,
He could not fear to want a heav'nly state.
Parthenope, on earth, can heav'n create.
PRETTY-MAN. Cloris does heav'n itself so far excel,
She can transcend the joys of heav'n in hell.

BAYES. There's a bold flight for you now! —'Sdeath, I have lost my peruke!—Well, gentlemen, this is that I never yet saw anyone could write but myself. Here's true spirit and flame all through, I gad. So, so! pray, clear the stage. [*He puts 'em off the stage*]

JOHNSON. But, Mr. Bayes, pray why is this scene all in verse?

BAYES. O sir, the subject is too great for prose.

SMITH. Well said, i'faith. I'll give thee a pot of ale for that answer; 'tis well worth it.

BAYES. Come, with all my heart.
"I'll make that god subscribe himself a devil." That single line, I gad, is worth all that my brother poets ever writ. So! now let down the curtain. [*Exeunt*]

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter BAYES *and the two* Gentlemen

BAYES. Now, gentlemen, I will be bold to say, I'll show you the greatest scene that ever England saw—I mean not for words, for those I do not value, but for state, show, and magnificence. In fine, I'll justify it to be as grand to the eye every whit, I gad, as that great scene in *Harry the Eight*—and grander too, I gad; for, instead of two bishops, I have brought in two other cardinals.

The Curtain is drawn up, and the two usurping Kings *appear in state, with the four* Cardinals, PRINCE PRETTY-MAN, PRINCE VOLSCIUS, AMARYLLIS, CLORIS, PARTHENOPE, *&c. Before them*, Heralds *and* Sergeants at Arms *with maces*

SMITH. Mr. Bayes, pray what is the reason that two of the cardinals are in hats and the other in caps?

BAYES. Why, sir, because—by gad, I won't tell you.

SMITH. I ask your pardon, sir.

KING USHER. Now, sir, to the business of the day.

VOLSCIUS. Dread sovereign lords, my zeal to you must not invade my duty to your son. Let me entreat that great Prince Pretty-man first do speak, whose high preëminence, in all things that do bear the name of good, may justly claim that privilege.

PRETTY-MAN. Royal father, upon my knees I beg
That the illustrious Volscius first be heard.

BAYES. Here it begins to unfold. You may perceive, now, that he is his son.

JOHNSON. Yes, sir; and we are very much beholden to you for that discovery.

VOLSCIUS. That preference is only due to Amaryllis, sir.

BAYES. I'll make her speak very well, by and by; you shall see.

AMARYLLIS. Invincible sovereigns—
[*Soft Music*]
KING USHER. But stay, what sound is this invades our ears?
KING PHYSICIAN. Sure 'tis the music of the moving spheres.
PRETTY-MAN. Behold, with wonder! yonder comes from far,
A god-like cloud and a triumphant car;

In which our two right kings sit one by one,
With virgin vests, and laurel garlands on.

KING USHER. Then, Brother Phys', 'tis time that we were gone.

[*The two* Usurpers *steal out of the Throne and go away*]

BAYES. Look you now, did not I tell you that this would be as easy a turn as the other?

SMITH. Yes, faith, you did so—though I confess, I could not believe you; but you have brought it about, I see.

[*The two right* Kings of Brentford *descend in the clouds, singing in white garments; and three fiddlers sitting before them, in green*]

BAYES. Now, because the two right kings descend from above, I make 'em sing to the tune and style of our modern spirits.

1ST KING. Haste, brother king, we are sent from above.

2D KING. Let us move, let us move—
Move to remove the fate
Of Brentford's long united state.

1ST KING. Tara, tara, tara, full east and by south,

2D KING. We sail with Thunder in our mouth;
In scorching noon-day, whilst the traveller stays,
Busy, busy, busy, busy, we bustle along.
Mounted upon warm Phœbus his rays,
Through the heavenly throng,
Haste to those
Who will feast us, at night, with a pig's pettitoes.

1ST KING. And we'll fall with our pate
In an olio[1] of hate.

2D KING. But now supper's done, the servitors try,
Like soldiers, to storm a whole half-moon pie.

1ST KING. They gather, they gather hot custard in spoons;
Alas, I must leave these half-moons,
And repair to my trusty dragoons.

2D KING. Oh, stay, for you need not as yet go astray;
The tide, like a friend, has brought ships in our way,
And on their high ropes we will play.
Like maggots in filberts, we'll snug in our shell;
We'll frisk in our shell,
We'll firk in our shell,
And farewell.

1ST KING. But the ladies have all inclination to dance,
And the green frogs croak out a coranto[2] of France.

BAYES. Is not that pretty, now? The fiddlers are all in green.

SMITH. Aye, but they play no coranto.

JOHNSON. No, but they play a tune; that's a great deal better.

BAYES. "No coranto," quoth a!—that's a good one, with all my heart!—Come, sing on.

2D KING. Now mortals that hear
How we tilt and career,
With wonder will fear
The event of such things as shall never appear.

1ST KING. Stay you to fulfil what the gods have decreed.

2D KING. Then call me to help you if there shall be need.

1ST KING. So firmly resolved is a true Brentford king
To save the distressed and help to 'em bring,
That ere a full pot of good ale you can swallow,
He's here with a whoop, and gone with a holla.

[BAYES *fillips his finger and sings after 'em*]

BAYES. He's here with a whoop, and gone with a holla. This, sir, you must know, I thought once to have brought in with a conjurer.

JOHNSON. Aye, that would have been better.

BAYES. No, faith, not when you consider it, for thus 'tis more compendious and does the thing every whit as well.

SMITH. Thing!—what thing?

BAYES. Why, bring 'em down again into the throne, sir. What thing would you have?

SMITH. Well; but methinks the sense of this song is not very plain.

BAYES. Plain? why, did you ever hear any people in clouds speak plain? They must be all for flight of fancy, at its full range,

1 A hotchpotch.

2 A lively dance.

without the least check or control upon it. When once you tie up spirits and people in clouds to speak plain, you spoil all.

SMITH. Bless me, what a monster's this!

[*The two* Kings *light out of the clouds and step into the throne*]

1ST KING. Come, now to serious counsel we'll advance.

2D KING. I do agree; but first let's have a dance.

BAYES. Right. You did that very well, Mr. Cartwright. [*Repeating*] But first let's have a dance. Pray, remember that; be sure you do it always just so, for it must be done as if it were the effect of thought and premeditation.—But first, let's have a dance. Pray, remember that.

SMITH. [*Aside*] Well, I can hold no longer; I must gag this rogue. There's no enduring of him.

JOHNSON. No, prithee, make use of thy patience a little longer; let's see the end of him now.

[*Dance a grand dance*]

BAYES. This, now, is an ancient dance, of right belonging to the Kings of Brentford, and since derived, with a little alteration, to the Inns of Court.

An Alarm. Enter two Heralds

1ST KING. What saucy groom molests our privacies?

1ST HERALD. The army's at the door and, in disguise,
Desires a word with both your Majesties:

2D HERALD. Having, from Knightsbridge, hither marched by stealth.

2D KING. Bid 'em attend a while and drink our health.

SMITH. How, Mr. Bayes—the army in disguise?

BAYES. Aye, sir, for fear the usurpers might discover them that went out but just now.

SMITH. Why, what if they had discovered them?

BAYES. Why, then they had broke this design.

SMITH. That's true, indeed. I did not think of that.

1ST KING. Here, take five guineas for those warlike men.

2D KING. And here's five more; that makes the sum just ten.

1ST HERALD. We have not seen so much the Lord knows when. [*Exeunt* Heralds]

1ST KING. Speak on, brave Amaryllis.

AMARYLLIS. Invincible sovereigns, blame not my modesty
If at this grand conjuncture—

[*Drum beats behind the stage*]

1ST KING. What dreadful noise is this that comes and goes?

Enter a Soldier *with his sword drawn*

SOLDIER. Haste hence, great sirs, your royal persons save,
For the event of war no mortal knows!
The army, wrangling for the gold you gave,
First fell to words, and then to handy-blows.

[*Exit*]

2D KING. Oh, dangerous estate of sovereign pow'r!
Obnoxious to the change of every hour.

1ST KING. Let us for shelter in our cabinet stay:
Perhaps these threat'ning storms may pass away.

[*Exeunt* Kings]

JOHNSON. But, Mr. Bayes, did not you promise us, just now, to make Amaryllis speak very well?

BAYES. Aye, and so she would have done but that they hindered her.

SMITH. How, sir?—whether you would or no?

BAYES. Aye, sir; the plot lay so that, I vow to gad, it was not to be avoided.

SMITH. Marry, that was hard.

JOHNSON. But, pray, who hindered her?

BAYES. Why, the battle, sir, that's just coming in at door. And I'll tell you now a strange thing; though I don't pretend to do more than other men, I gad, I'll give you both a whole week to guess how I'll represent this battle.

SMITH. I had rather be bound to fight your battle, sir, I assure you.

BAYES. Why, there 's it now: Fight a battle? there 's the common error. I knew presently where I should have you. Why, pray, sir, do but tell me this one thing: Can you think it a decent thing, in a battle before ladies, to have men run their swords through one another, and all that?

JOHNSON. No, faith, 'tis not civil.

BAYES. On the other side: To have a long relation of squadrons here, and squadrons there— what is that but a dull prolixity?

JOHNSON. Excellently reasoned, by my troth!

BAYES. Wherefore, sir, to avoid both those indecorums, I sum up my whole battle in the representation of two persons only— no more—and yet so lively that, I vow to gad, you would swear ten thousand men were at it, really engaged. Do you mark me?

SMITH. Yes, sir; but I think I should hardly swear, though, for all that.

BAYES. By my troth, sir, but you would, though, when you see it; for I make 'em both come out in armor, cap-a-pie, with their swords drawn and hung with a scarlet ribbon at their wrists (which, you know, represents fighting enough), each of 'em holding a lute in his hand.

SMITH. How, sir—instead of a buckler?

BAYES. O Lord, O Lord!—Instead of a buckler? Pray, sir, do you ask no more questions. I make 'em, sir, play the battle in *recitativo*. And here's the conceit; just at the very same instant that one sings, the other, sir, recovers you his sword and puts himself in a warlike posture, so that you have at once your ear entertained with music and good language, and your eye satisfied with the garb and accoutrements of war. Is not that well?

JOHNSON. Aye; what would you have more? He were a devil that would not be satisfied with that.

SMITH. I confess, sir, you stupefy me.

BAYES. You shall see.

JOHNSON. But, Mr. Bayes, might not we have a little fighting? For I love those plays where they cut and slash one another, upon the stage, for a whole hour together.

BAYES. Why, then, to tell you true, I have contrived it both ways. But you shall have my *recitativo* first.

Enter at several doors the General *and* Lieutenant-General, *armed cap-a-pie, with each of them a lute in his hand, and his sword drawn and hung with a scarlet ribbon at his wrist*

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. Villain, thou liest!
GENERAL. Arm, arm, Gonsalvo, arm! What ho!
The lie no flesh can brook, I trow.
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. Advance, from Acton, with the musketeers.
GENERAL. Draw down the Chelsea cuirassiers.
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. The Band you boast of, Chelsea cuirassiers,
Shall, in my Putney pikes, now meet their peers.
GENERAL. Chiswickians agèd, and renowned in fight,
Join with the Hammersmith brigade.
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. You'll find my Mortlake boys will do them right,
Unless by Fulham numbers overlaid.
GENERAL. Let the left wing of Twick'nam foot advance
And line that eastern hedge.
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. The horse I raised in Petty-France[1]
Shall try their chance.
And scour the meadows, overgrown with sedge.
GENERAL. Stand! give the word.
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. Bright sword.
GENERAL. That may be thine,
But 'tis not mine.
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. Give fire, give fire— at once give fire—
And let those recreant troops perceive mine ire.
GENERAL. Pursue, pursue! They fly
That first did give the lie.
[*Exeunt*]

BAYES. This, now, is not improper, I think, because the spectators know all these towns, and may easily conceive them to be within the dominions of the two kings of Brentford.

JOHNSON. Most exceeding well designed!

BAYES. How do you think I have contrived to give a stop to this battle?

[1] A street near Moorfields (N.).

SMITH. How?

BAYES. By an eclipse—which, let me tell you, is a kind of fancy that was yet never so much as thought of, but by myself and one person more that shall be nameless. Come, come in, Mr.—a—

Enter Lieutenant-General

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL. What midnight darkness does invade the day,
And snatch the victor from his conquered prey?
Is the Sun weary of his bloody fight,
And winks upon us with his eye of light?
'Tis an eclipse. This was unkind, O Moon,
To clap between me and the Sun so soon.
Foolish Eclipse! thou this in vain hast done;
My brighter honor had eclips'd the Sun.
But now behold eclipses two in one. [*Exit*]

JOHNSON. This is an admirable representation of a battle as ever I saw.

BAYES. Aye, sir. But how would you fancy now to represent an eclipse?

SMITH. Why, that's to be supposed.

BAYES. Supposed! Aye, you are ever at your "suppose"—ha, ha, ha! Why, you may as well suppose the whole play. No, it must come in upon the stage, that's certain—but in some odd way that may delight, amuse, and all that. I have a conceit for't that I am sure is new and, I believe, to the purpose.

JOHNSON. How's that?

BAYES. Why, the truth is, I took the first hint of this out of a dialogue between Phœbus and Aurora, in *The Slighted Maid*—which, by my troth, was very pretty, though I think you'll confess this is a little better.

JOHNSON. No doubt on't, Mr. Bayes.

BAYES. But, sir, you have heard, I suppose, that your eclipse of the moon is nothing else but an interposition of the earth between the sun and moon; as likewise your eclipse of the sun is caused by an interlocation of the moon betwixt the earth and sun?

SMITH. I have heard so, indeed.

BAYES. Well, sir, what do me I but make the earth, sun, and moon come out upon the stage and dance the hey-hum? And of necessity by the very nature of this dance, the earth must be sometimes between the sun and the moon, and the moon between the earth and sun; and there you have both your eclipses. That is new, I gad—ha?

JOHNSON. That must needs be very fine, truly.

BAYES. Yes, there is some fancy in't. And then, sir, that there may be something in it of a joke, I make the moon sell the earth a bargain.—Come! come out eclipse, to the tune of *Tom Tyler*.

Enter Moon

MOON. [*Singing*] Orbis, O Orbis!
Come to me, thou little rogue Orbis.

Enter the Earth

EARTH. What calls Terra firma, pray?
MOON. Luna that ne'er shines by day.
EARTH. What means Luna in a veil?
MOON. Luna means to show her tail.

Enter Sun

SUN. Fie, sister, fie! thou mak'st me muse,
Dery, dery down,
To see thee Orb abuse.
MOON. I hope his anger 'twill not move,
Since I did it out of love.
Hey down, dery down.
EARTH. Where shall I thy true love know,
Thou pretty, pretty Moon?
MOON. To-morrow soon, ere it be noon—
[*Together*]
On Mount Vesuvio.
SUN. Then I will shine.
EARTH. And I will be fine.
MOON. And we will drink nothing but Lipari[1] wine.
ALL. And we, etc.

BAYES. So, now, vanish Eclipse, and enter t'other battle, and fight. Here now, if I am not mistaken, you will see fighting enough.

[*A battle is fought between foot- and great-hobby-horses. At last,* DRAWCANSIR *comes in, and kills 'em all on both sides. All this while the battle is fighting,* BAYES *is telling them when to shout, and shouts with 'em*]

[1] Islands north of Sicily.

DRAWCANSIR. Others may boast a single man to kill,
But I the blood of thousands daily spill.
Let petty kings the names of parties know;
Where'er I come, I slay both friend and foe.
The swiftest horsemen my swift rage controls,
And from their bodies drives their trembling souls.
If they had wings and to the gods could fly,
I would pursue, and beat 'em, through the sky;
And make proud Jove, with all his thunder, see
This single arm more dreadful is than he.
[*Exit*]

BAYES. There's a brave fellow for you now, sirs. I have read of your Hector, your Achilles, and a hundred more; but I defy all your histories, and your romances too, I gad, to show me one such conqueror as this Drawcansir.

JOHNSON. I swear, I think you may.

SMITH. But, Mr. Bayes, how shall all these dead men go off? for I see none alive to help 'em.

BAYES. Go off! why, as they came on—upon their legs. How should they go off? Why, do you think the people do not know they are not dead? He is mighty ignorant, poor man; your friend here is very silly, Mr. Johnson, I gad, he is. Come, sir, I'll show you "go off."—Rise, sirs, and go about your business. There's "go off" for you.—Hark you, Mr. Ivory.—Gentlemen, I'll be with you presently. [*Exit*]

JOHNSON. Will you so? then we'll be gone.

SMITH. Aye, prithee, let's go, that we may preserve our hearing. One battle more would take mine quite away. [*Exeunt*]

Enter BAYES *and* Players

BAYES. Where are the gentlemen?

1ST PLAYER. They are gone, sir.

BAYES. Gone! 'Sdeath, this last act is best of all. I'll go fetch 'em again. [*Exit*]

3D PLAYER. Stay, here's a foul piece of paper of his. Let's see what 'tis.
[*Reads: The Argument of the Fifth Act*]

Cloris, at length, being sensible of Prince Pretty-man's passion, consents to marry him; but just as they are going to church, Prince Pretty-man meeting, by chance, with old Joan the chandler's widow, and rememb'ring it was she that brought him acquainted with Cloris, out of a high point of honor breaks[1] off his match with Cloris and marries old Joan. Upon which, Cloris in despair drowns herself, and Prince Pretty-man discontentedly walks by the river side.

1ST PLAYER. Pox on't, this will never do; 'tis just like the rest. Come, let's be gone. [*Exeunt*]

Enter BAYES

BAYES. A plague on 'em both for me! they have made me sweat to run after 'em. A couple of senseless rascals that had rather go to dinner than see this play out, with a pox to 'em! What comfort has a man to write for such dull rogues?—[*Calls*] Come Mr.—a—Where are you, sir? come away quick—quick!

Enter Players *again*

PLAYER. Sir, they are gone to dinner.

BAYES. Yes, I know the gentlemen are gone, but I ask for the players.

PLAYER. Why, an't please your worship, sir, the players are gone to dinner too.

BAYES. How! are the players gone to dinner? 'Tis impossible: the players gone to dinner! I gad, if they are, I'll make 'em know what it is to injure a person that does 'em the honor to write for 'em, and all that. A company of proud, conceited, humorous, cross-grained persons, and all that. I gad, I'll make 'em the most contemptible, despicable, inconsiderable persons, and all that, in the whole world, for this trick. I gad, I'll be revenged on 'em; I'll sell this play to the other house.

PLAYER. Nay, good sir, don't take away the book; you'll disappoint the town, that comes to see it acted here this afternoon.

BAYES. That's all one. I must reserve this comfort to myself. My book and I will go together; we will not part, indeed, sir. The town! why, what care I for the town? I gad, the town has used me as

[1] Q1 *break.*

scurvily as the players have done. But I'll be revenged on them too; I will both lampoon and print 'em too, I gad. Since they will not admit of my plays, they shall know what a satirist I am. And so farewell to this stage forever, I gad. [*Exit*]

1ST PLAYER. What shall we do now?

2D PLAYER. Come, then, let's set up bills for another play. We shall lose nothing by this, I warrant you.

1ST PLAYER. I am of your opinion. But before we go let's see Haynes and Shirley practise the last dance, for that may serve for another play.

2D PLAYER. I'll call 'em; I think they are in the tiring-room.

Enter Dancers: *they dance. The dance done*

1ST PLAYER. Come, come; let's go away to dinner. [*Exeunt Omnes*]

EPILOGUE

The play is at an end, but where's the plot?
That circumstance our poet Bayes forgot,
And we can boast, though 'tis a plotting age,
No place is freer from it than the stage.
The ancients plotted though, and strove to please
With sense that might be understood with ease;
They every scene with so much wit did store
That who brought any in, went out with more.
But this new way of wit does so surprise,
Men lose their wits in wond'ring where it lies.
If it be true that monstrous births presage
The following mischiefs that afflict the age,
And sad disasters to the state proclaim,
Plays without head or tail may do the same.
Wherefore, for ours, and for the kingdom's peace,
May this prodigious way of writing cease.
Let's have at least once in our lives a time
When we may hear some reason, not all rhyme:
We have these ten years felt its influence;
Pray, let this prove a year of prose and sense.

THE MAN OF MODE; OR, SIR FOPLING FLUTTER

By George Etherege

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Gentlemen

Mr. Dorimant
Mr. Medley
Old Bellair
Young Bellair
Sir Fopling Flutter

Gentlewomen

Lady Townley [sister of Old Bellair]
Emilia [companion of Lady Townley]
Mrs. Loveit [Dorimant's former mistress]
Bellinda [friend of Dorimant]
Lady Woodvill [a country gentlewoman]
Harriet [daughter of Lady Woodvill]

Waiting-women

Pert
Busy

[Swearing Tom], a Shoemaker
[Foggy Nan], an Orange-Woman
Three Slovenly Bullies
Two Chairmen
Mr. Smirk, a parson
Handy, *valet-de-chambre* [to Mr. Dorimant]
Pages, Footmen, etc.

[Scene: *London*]

[Time: *Contemporary*]

[DEDICATION]

To her Royal Highness the Duchess

Madam,

Poets, however they may be modest otherwise, have always too good an opinion of what they write. The world, when it sees this play dedicated to your Royal Highness, will conclude I have more than my share of vanity. But I hope the honor I have of belonging to you will excuse my presumption. 'Tis the first thing I have produced in your service, and my duty obliges me to what my choice durst not else have aspired. 11

I am very sensible, madam, how much it is beholding to your indulgence for the success it had in the acting, and your protection will be no less fortunate to it in the printing; for all are so ambitious of making their court to you, that none can be severe to what you are pleased to favor. 18

This universal submission and respect is due to the greatness of your rank and birth, but you have many other illustrious qualities which are much more engaging. Those would but dazzle did not these really charm the eyes and understandings of all who have the happiness to approach you. 25

Authors on these occasions are never wanting to publish a particular of their patron's virtues and perfections; but your Royal Highness's are so eminently known that, did I follow their examples, I should but paint those wonders here of which everyone already has the idea in his mind. Besides, I do not think it proper to aim at that in prose which is so glorious a subject for verse; in which hereafter if I show more zeal than skill, it will grieve me much, since I less passionately desire to be esteemed a poet than to be thought, Madam, 37

Your Royal Highness's most humble, most obedient, and most faithful servant,

George Etherege

PROLOGUE

By Sir Car Scroope, Baronet

Like dancers on the ropes poor poets fare,
Most perish young, the rest in danger are;
This, one would think, should make our authors wary,
But, gamester like, the giddy fools miscarry.

A lucky hand or two so tempts 'em on,
They cannot leave off play till they're undone.
With modest fears a muse does first begin,
Like a young wench newly enticed to sin;
But tickled once with praise, by her good will,
The wanton fool would never more lie still.

'Tis an old mistress you'll meet here to-night,
Whose charms you once have looked on with delight.
But now of late such dirty drabs have known ye,
A muse o'th' better sort's ashamed to own ye.
Nature well drawn, and wit, must now give place
To gaudy nonsense and to dull grimace;
Nor is it strange that you should like so much
That kind of wit, for most of yours is such.
But I'm afraid that while to France we go,
To bring you home fine dresses, dance, and show,
The stage, like you, will but more foppish grow.
Of foreign wares, why should we fetch the scum,
When we can be so richly served at home?
For Heav'n be thanked, 'tis not so wise an age
But your own follies must supply the stage.
Tho' often plowed, there's 'no great fear the soil
Should barren grow by the too frequent toil;
While at your doors are to be daily found
Such loads of dunghill to manure the ground.
'Tis by your follies that we players thrive,
As the physicians by diseases live;
And as each year some new distemper reigns,
Whose friendly poison helps t'increase their gains,
So among you there starts up every day
Some new, unheard-of fool for us to play.
Then, for your own sakes be not too severe,
Nor what you all admire at home, damn here;
Since each is fond of his own ugly face,
Why should you, when we hold it, break the glass?

ACT I

SCENE I. *A dressing-room. A table covered with a toilet; clothes laid ready*

Enter DORIMANT *in his gown and slippers, with a note in his hand, made up, repeating verses*

DORIMANT. Now for some ages had the pride of Spain
Made half the sun shine on the world in vain.

(*Then looking* [*at*] *the note,* [*he reads*]) *For Mrs. Loveit.*—What a dull, insipid thing is a billet-doux written in cold blood, after the heat of the business is over! It is a tax upon good nature which I have here been laboring to pay, and have done it, but with as much regret as ever fanatic paid the Royal Aid or church duties. 'Twill have the same fate, I know, that all my notes to her have had of late; 'twill not be thought kind enough. 'Faith, women are i'the right when they jealously examine our letters, for in them we always first discover our decay of passion.—Hey! Who waits?

Enter HANDY

HANDY. Sir—

DORIMANT. Call a footman.

HANDY. None of 'em are come yet.

DORIMANT. Dogs! Will they ever lie snoring abed till noon?

HANDY. 'Tis all one, sir; if they're up, you indulge 'em so they're ever poaching all the morning.

DORIMANT. Take notice henceforward; who's wanting in his duty, he shall rot for an example.—What vermin are those chattering without?

HANDY. Foggy Nan, the orange-woman, and Swearing Tom, the shoemaker.

DORIMANT. Go, call in that over-grown jade with the flasket of guts before her; fruit is refreshing in a morning. *Exit* HANDY [*Reads*]

It is not that I love you less
Than when before your feet I lay—

Enter Orange-Woman [*and* HANDY]

—How now, double tripe, what news do you bring?

ORANGE-WOMAN. News! Here's the best fruit has come to town t'year; gad, I was up before four o'clock this morning and bought all the choice i'the market.

DORIMANT. [*Inspecting it*] The nasty refuse of your shop.

ORANGE-WOMAN. You need not make mouths at it; I assure you, 'tis all culled ware.

DORIMANT. The citizens buy better on a holiday in their walk to Totnam.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Good or bad, 'tis all one; I never knew you commend anything. Lord! would the ladies had heard you talk of 'em as I have done! (*Sets down the fruit*) Here, bid your man give me an angel.[1]

DORIMANT. [*To* HANDY] Give the bawd her fruit again.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Well, on my conscience, there never was the like of you!—God's my life, I had almost forgot to tell you there is a young gentlewoman lately come to town with her mother, that is so taken with you.

DORIMANT. Is she handsome?

ORANGE-WOMAN. Nay,[2] gad, there are few finer women, I tell you—but so!—and a hugeous fortune, they say.—Here, eat this peach. It comes from the stone; 'tis better than any Newington y'have tasted.

DORIMANT. (*Taking the peach*) This fine woman, I'll lay my life. is some awkward, ill-fashioned country toad who, not having above four dozen of black hairs on her head, has adorned her baldness with a large, white fruz, that she may look sparkishly in the forefront of the King's box at an old play.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Gad, you'd change your note quickly if you did but see her.

DORIMANT. How came she to know me?

ORANGE-WOMAN. She saw you yesterday at the *Change*. She told me you came and fooled with the woman at the next shop.

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] I remember there was a mask observed me, indeed.—Fooled, did she say?

ORANGE-WOMAN. Aye; I vow she told me twenty things you said, too, and acted with head and with her body so like you—

Enter MEDLEY

MEDLEY. Dorimant, my life, my joy, my darling sin! how dost thou?

[*They embrace*]

ORANGE-WOMAN. Lord, what a filthy trick these men have got of kissing one another!

(*She spits*)

MEDLEY. Why do you suffer this cartload of scandal to come near you and make your neighbors think you so improvident [as] to need a bawd?

ORANGE-WOMAN. [*To* MEDLEY] Gad, now we shall have it you did but want him to help you!—[*To* DORIMANT] Come, pay me for my fruit.

MEDLEY. Make us thankful for it, huswife, bawds are as much out of fashion as gentlemen-ushers; none but old formal ladies use the one, and none but foppish old stagers employ the other. Go! You are an insignificant brandy bottle.

DORIMANT. Nay, there you wrong her; three quarts of Canary is her business.

ORANGE-WOMAN. What you please, gentlemen.

DORIMANT. To him! give him as good as he brings.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Hang him, there is not such another heathen in the town again, except it be the shoemaker without.

MEDLEY. I shall see you hold up your hand at the bar next sessions for murder, huswife; that shoemaker can take his oath you are in fee with the doctors to sell green fruit to the gentry, that the crudities may breed diseases.

ORANGE-WOMAN. [*To* DORIMANT] Pray, give me my money.

DORIMANT. Not a penny! When you bring the gentlewoman hither you spoke of, you shall be paid.

1 See 14, 78 and n.
2 Merely an ejaculation.

ORANGE-WOMAN. The gentlewoman! the gentlewoman may be as honest as your sisters for aught I know.—Pray, pay me, Mr. Dorimant, and do not abuse me so; I have an honester way of living—you know it.

MEDLEY. Was there ever such a restive bawd!

DORIMANT. Some jade's tricks she has, but she makes amends when she's in good humor. [*To the* ORANGE-WOMAN] Come, tell me the lady's name and Handy shall pay you.

ORANGE-WOMAN. I must not; she forbid me.

[MEDLEY. *To* DORIMANT] That's a sure sign she would have you.

[DORIMANT.] Where does she live?

ORANGE-WOMAN. They lodge at my house.

MEDLEY. Nay, then she's in a hopeful way.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Good Mr. Medley, say your pleasure of me, but take heed how you affront my house!—God's my life, in a hopeful way!

DORIMANT. Prithee, peace! What kind of woman's the mother?

ORANGE-WOMAN. A goodly, grave gentlewoman. Lord, how she talks against the wild young men o' the town! As for your part, she thinks you an arrant devil; should she see you, on my conscience she would look if you had not a cloven foot.

DORIMANT. Does she know me?

ORANGE-WOMAN. Only by hearsay; a thousand horrid stories have been told her of you, and she believes 'em all.

MEDLEY. By the character this should be the famous Lady Woodvill and her daughter Harriet.

ORANGE-WOMAN. [*Aside*] The devil's in him for guessing, I think.

DORIMANT. Do you know 'em?

MEDLEY. Both very well; the mother's a great admirer of the forms and civility of the last age.

DORIMANT. An antiquated beauty may be allowed to be out of humor at the freedoms of the present. This is a good account of the mother; pray, what is the daughter?

MEDLEY. Why, first, she's an heiress—vastly rich.

DORIMANT. And handsome?

MEDLEY. What alteration a twelvemonth may have bred in her I know not, but a year ago she was the beautifullest creature I ever saw: a fine, easy, clean shape; light brown hair in abundance; her features regular; her complexion clear and lively; large, wanton eyes; but above all, a mouth that has made me kiss it a hundred times in imagination; teeth white and even, and pretty, pouting lips, with a little moisture ever hanging on them, that look like the Provence rose fresh on the bush, ere the morning sun has quite drawn up the dew.

DORIMANT. Rapture! mere[1] rapture!

ORANGE-WOMAN. Nay, gad, he tells you true; she's a delicate creature.

DORIMANT. Has she wit?

MEDLEY. More than is usual in her sex, and as much malice. Then, she's as wild as you would wish her, and has a demureness in her looks that makes it so surprising.

DORIMANT. Flesh and blood cannot hear this and not long to know her.

MEDLEY. I wonder what makes her mother bring her up to town; an old doating keeper cannot be more jealous of his mistress.

ORANGE-WOMAN. She made me laugh yesterday; there was a judge came to visit 'em, and the old man she told me did so stare upon her, and when he saluted her smacked so heartily. Who would think it of 'em?

MEDLEY. God a-mercy! Judge!

DORIMANT. Do 'em right; the gentlemen of the long robe have not been wanting by their good examples to countenance the crying sin o' the nation.

MEDLEY. Come, on with your trappings; 'tis later than you imagine.

DORIMANT. Call in the shoemaker, Handy.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Good Mr. Dorimant, pay me. Gad, I had rather give you my fruit than stay to be abused by that foulmouthed rogue; what you gentlemen say, it matters not much, but such a dirty fellow does one more disgrace.

[1] pure.

DORIMANT. Give her ten shillings—and be sure you tell the young gentlewoman I must be acquainted with her.

ORANGE-WOMAN. Now do you long to be tempting this pretty creature. Well, heavens mend you!

MEDLEY. Farewell, bog!

[*Exit* ORANGE-WOMAN *and* HANDY]—Dorimant, when did you see your *pis-aller*,[1] as you call her?—Mrs. Loveit.

DORIMANT. Not these two days.

MEDLEY. And how stand affairs between you?

DORIMANT. There has been great patching of late, much ado; we make a shift to hang together.

MEDLEY. I wonder how her mighty spirit bears it.

DORIMANT. Ill enough, on all conscience; I never knew so violent a creature.

MEDLEY. She's the most passionate in her love and the most extravagant in her jealousy of any woman I ever heard of.—What note is that?

DORIMANT. An excuse I am going to send her for the neglect I am guilty of.

MEDLEY. Prithee, read it.

DORIMANT. No; but if you will take the pains, you may.

MEDLEY. (*Reads*)

I never was a lover of business, but now I have a just reason to hate it, since it has kept me these two days from seeing you. I intend to wait upon you in the afternoon, and in the pleasure of your conversation forget all I have suffered during this tedious absence.

This business of yours, Dorimant, has been with a vizard[2] at the playhouse; I have had an eye on you. If some malicious body should betray you, this kind note would hardly make your peace with her.

DORIMANT. I desire no better.

MEDLEY. Why, would her knowledge of it oblige you?

DORIMANT. Most infinitely; next to the coming to a good understanding with a new mistress, I love a quarrel with an old one. But the devil's in't! There has been such a calm in my affairs of late, I have not had the pleasure of making a woman so much as break her fan, to be sullen, or forswear herself, these three days.

MEDLEY. A very great misfortune. Let me see; I love mischief well enough to forward this business myself. I'll be about it presently, and though I know the truth of what you've done will set her a-raving, I'll heighten it a little with invention, leave her in a fit o' the mother, and be here again before y'are ready.

DORIMANT. Pray, stay; you may spare yourself the labor. The business is undertaken already by one who will manage it with as much address, and I think with a little more malice than you can.

MEDLEY. Who i'the devil's name can this be!

DORIMANT. Why, the vizard—that very vizard you saw me with.

MEDLEY. Does she love mischief so well as to betray herself to spite another?

DORIMANT. Not so neither, Medley. I will make you comprehend the mystery. This mask, for a farther confirmation of what I have been these two days swearing to her, made me yesterday at the playhouse make her a promise before her face utterly to break off with Loveit, and, because she tenders[3] my reputation and would not have me do a barbarous thing, has contrived a way to give me a handsome occasion.

MEDLEY. Very good.

DORIMANT. She intends about an hour before me, this afternoon, to make Loveit a visit and, having the privilege by reason of a professed friendship between them, to talk of her concerns.

MEDLEY. Is she a friend?

DORIMANT. Oh, an intimate friend!

MEDLEY. Better and better; pray, proceed.

DORIMANT. She means insensibly to insinuate a discourse of me and artificially to raise her jealousy to such a height that, transported with the first motions of her passion, she shall fly upon me with all the

1 last resort. 2 mask. 3 esteems.

fury imaginable as soon as ever I enter. The quarrel being thus happily begun, I am to play my part, confess and justify all my roguery, swear her impertinence and ill-humor make her intolerable, tax her with the next fop that comes into my head, and in a huff march away—slight her and leave her to be taken by whosoever thinks it worth his time to lie down before her.

MEDLEY. This vizard is a spark and has a genius that makes her worthy of yourself, Dorimant.

Enter HANDY, *the* Shoemaker, *and a* Footman

DORIMANT. You rogue there, who sneak like a dog that has flung down a dish! if you do not mend your waiting, I'll uncase you and turn you loose to the wheel of fortune. —Handy, seal this and let him run with it presently. [*Gives him the letter*]

Exit the Footman

MEDLEY. Since you're resolved on a quarrel, why do you send her this kind note?

DORIMANT. To keep her at home in order to the business. (*To the* Shoemaker) How now, you drunken sot?

SHOEMAKER. 'Zbud, you have no reason to talk; I have not had a bottle of sack of yours in my belly this fortnight.

MEDLEY. The orange-woman says your neighbors take notice what a heathen you are, and design to inform a bishop and have you burned for an atheist.

SHOEMAKER. Damn her, dunghill, if her husband does not remove her, she stinks so, the parish intends to indict him for a nuisance.

MEDLEY. I advise you like a friend; reform your life. You have brought the envy of the world upon you by living above yourself. Whoring and swearing are vices too genteel for a shoemaker.

SHOEMAKER. 'Zbud, I think you men of quality will grow as unreasonable as the women. You would engross the sins of the nation; poor folks can no sooner be wicked but they're railed at by their betters.

DORIMANT. Sirrah, I'll have you stand i'the pillory for this libel!

SHOEMAKER. Some of you deserve it, I'm sure; there are so many of 'em, that our journeymen nowadays, instead of harmless ballads, sing nothing but your damned lampoons.

DORIMANT. Our lampoons, you rogue!

SHOEMAKER. Nay, good master, why should not you write your own commentaries as well as Cæsar?

MEDLEY. The rascal's read, I perceive.

SHOEMAKER. You know the old proverb —ale and history.

DORIMANT. Draw on my shoes, sirrah.

SHOEMAKER. [*Obeying*] Here's a shoe!

DORIMANT. Sits with more wrinkles than there are in an angry bully's forehead!

SHOEMAKER. 'Zbud, as smooth as your mistress's skin does upon her! So; strike your foot in home. 'Zbud, if e'er a monsieur of 'em all make more fashionable ware, I'll be content to have my ears whipped off with my own paring knife.

MEDLEY. And served up in a ragout instead of coxcombs to a company of French shoemakers for a collation.

SHOEMAKER. Hold, hold! Damn 'em—caterpillars! Let 'em feed upon cabbage.—Come master, your health this morning's next my heart now. [*Holds out his hand for money*]

DORIMANT. Go! Get you home and govern your family better! Do not let your wife follow you to the alehouse, beat your whore, and lead you home in triumph.

SHOEMAKER. 'Zbud, there's never a man i'the town lives more like a gentleman with his wife than I do. I never mind her motions[1]; she never inquires into mine. We speak to one another civilly, hate one another heartily, and because 'tis vulgar to lie and soak[2] together, we have each of us our several[3] settle-bed.

DORIMANT. [*To* MEDLEY] Give him half a crown.

MEDLEY. Not without he will promise to be bloody drunk.

SHOEMAKER. Tope's the word i'the eye of the world, for my master's honor, Robin.

1 activities. 2 drink heavily. 3 individual.

DORIMANT. Do not debauch my servants, sirrah.

[MEDLEY.] I only tip him the wink; he knows an alehouse from a hovel.

Exit Shoemaker

DORIMANT. [*To* HANDY] My clothes, quickly.

MEDLEY. Where shall we dine to-day?

DORIMANT. Where you will; here comes a good third man.

[*Enter* YOUNG BELLAIR]

YOUNG BELLAIR. Your servant, gentlemen.

MEDLEY. Gentle sir, how will you answer this visit to your honorable mistress? 'Tis not her interest you should keep company with men of sense who will be talking reason.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I do not fear her pardon; do you but grant me yours for my neglect of late.

MEDLEY. Though you've made us miserable by the want of your good company, to show you I am free from all resentment, may the beautiful cause of our resentment give you all the joys happy lovers have shared ever since the world began.

YOUNG BELLAIR. You wish me in Heaven, but you believe me on my journey to hell.

MEDLEY. You have a good strong faith, and that may contribute much towards your salvation. I confess I am but of an untoward constitution, apt to have doubts and scruples—and in love they are no less distracting than in religion. Were I so near marriage, I should cry out by fits as I ride in my coach, "Cuckold, cuckold!" with no less fury than the mad fanatic does "glory!" in Bethlem.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Because religion makes some run mad must I live an atheist?

MEDLEY. Is it not great indiscretion for a man of credit, who may have money enough on his word, to go and deal with Jews, who for little sums make men enter into bonds and give judgments?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Preach no more on this text. I am determined, and there is no hope of my conversion.

DORIMANT. (*To* HANDY, *who is fiddling about him*) Leave your unnecessary fiddling; a wasp that's buzzing about a man's nose at dinner is not more troublesome than thou art.

HANDY. You love to have your clothes hang just, sir.

DORIMANT. I love to be well dressed, sir, and think it no scandal to my understanding.

HANDY. Will you use the essence or orange flower water?

DORIMANT. I will smell as I do to-day, no offence to the ladies' noses.

HANDY. Your pleasure, sir. [*Exit* HANDY]

DORIMANT. That a man's excellency should lie in neatly tying of a ribband or a cravat! How careful's nature in furnishing the world with necessary coxcombs!

YOUNG BELLAIR. That's a mighty pretty suit of yours, Dorimant.

DORIMANT. I am glad't has your approbation.

YOUNG BELLAIR. No man in town has a better fancy in his clothes than you have.

DORIMANT. You will make me have an opinion of my genius.

MEDLEY. There is a great critic, I hear, in these matters lately arrived piping hot from Paris.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Sir Fopling Flutter, you mean?

MEDLEY. The same.

YOUNG BELLAIR. He thinks himself the pattern of modern gallantry.

DORIMANT. He is indeed the pattern of modern foppery.

MEDLEY. He was yesterday at the play, with a pair of gloves up to his elbows, and a periwig more exactly curled than a lady's head newly dressed for a ball.

YOUNG BELLAIR. What a pretty lisp he has!

DORIMANT. Ho! that he affects in imitation of the people of quality of France.

MEDLEY. His head stands, for the most part, on one side, and his looks are more languishing than a lady's when she lolls at stretch in her coach or leans her head carelessly against the side of a box i'the playhouse.

DORIMANT. He is a person indeed of great acquired follies.

MEDLEY. He is like many others, beholding to his education for making him so eminent a coxcomb. Many a fool had been lost to the world had their indulgent parents wisely bestowed neither learning nor good breeding on 'em.

YOUNG BELLAIR. He has been, as the sparkish word is, "brisk upon the ladies" already. He was yesterday at my Aunt Townley's and gave Mrs. Loveit a catalogue of his good qualities under the character of "a complete gentleman," who, according to Sir Fopling, ought to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a genius for love letters, an agreeable voice for a chamber, be very amorous, something discreet, but not overconstant.

MEDLEY. Pretty ingredients to make an accomplished person!

DORIMANT. I am glad he pitched upon Loveit.

YOUNG BELLAIR. How so?

DORIMANT. I wanted a fop to lay to her charge, and this is as pat as may be.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I am confident she loves no man but you.

DORIMANT. The good fortune were enough to make me vain, but that I am in my nature modest.

YOUNG BELLAIR. [*Whispers*] Hark you, Dorimant. [*Aloud*]—With your leave, Mr. Medley; 'tis only a secret concerning a fair lady.

MEDLEY. Your good breeding, sir, gives you too much trouble; you might have whispered without all this ceremony.

YOUNG BELLAIR. (*To* DORIMANT) How stand your affairs with Bellinda of late?

DORIMANT. She's a little jilting baggage.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Nay, I believe her false enough, but she's ne'er the worse for your purpose; she was with you yesterday in a disguise at the play.

DORIMANT. There we fell out and resolved never to speak to one another more.

YOUNG BELLAIR. The occasion?

DORIMANT. —Want of courage to meet me at the place appointed. These young women apprehend loving as much as the young men do fighting, at first; but once entered, like them too, they all turn bullies straight.

Enter HANDY

HANDY. [*To* BELLAIR] Sir, your man without desires to speak with you.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Gentlemen, I'll return immediately. *Exit* BELLAIR

MEDLEY. A very pretty fellow this.

DORIMANT. He's handsome, well bred, and by much the most tolerable of all the young men that do not abound in wit.

MEDLEY. Ever well dressed, always complaisant, and seldom impertinent. You and he are grown very intimate, I see.

DORIMANT. It is our mutual interest to be so: it makes the women think the better of his understanding, and judge more favorably of my reputation; it makes him pass upon some for a man of very good sense, and I upon others for a very civil person.

MEDLEY. What was that whisper?

DORIMANT. A thing which he would fain have known, but I did not think it fit to tell him; it might have frightened him from his honorable intentions of marrying.

MEDLEY. Emilia—give her her due—has the best reputation of any young woman about the town who has beauty enough to provoke detraction. Her carriage is unaffected, her discourse modest—not at all censorious nor pretending, like the counterfeits of the age.

DORIMANT. She's a discreet maid, and I believe nothing can corrupt her but a husband.

MEDLEY. A husband?

DORIMANT. Yes, a husband. I have known many a woman make a difficulty of losing a maidenhead, who have afterwards made none of making a cuckold.

MEDLEY. This prudent consideration I am apt to think has made you confirm poor Bellair in the desperate resolution he has taken.

DORIMANT. Indeed, the little hope I found there was of her, in the state she was

in, has made me by my advice contribute something towards the changing of her condition.

[*Re-*]*enter* [YOUNG] BELLAIR

—Dear Bellair! By heavens, I thought we had lost thee; men in love are never to be reckoned on when we would form a company.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Dorimant, I am undone. My man has brought the most surprising news i'the world.

DORIMANT. Some strange misfortune has befallen your love?

YOUNG BELLAIR. My father came to town last night and lodges i'the very house where Emilia lies.

MEDLEY. Does he know it is with her you are in love?

YOUNG BELLAIR. He knows I love, but knows not whom, without some officious sot has betrayed me.

DORIMANT. Your Aunt Townley is your confidant and favors the business.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I do not apprehend any ill office from her. I have received a letter, in which I am commanded by my father to meet him at my aunt's this afternoon. He tells me farther he has made a match for me and bids me resolve to be obedient to his will or expect to be disinherited.

MEDLEY. Now's your time, Bellair. Never had lover such an opportunity of giving a generous proof of his passion.

YOUNG BELLAIR. As how, I pray.

MEDLEY. Why, hang an estate, marry Emilia out of hand, and provoke your father to do what he threatens. 'Tis but despising a coach, humbling yourself to a pair of goloshes, being out of countenance when you meet your friends, pointed at and pitied wherever you go by all the amorous fops that know you, and your fame will be immortal.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I could find in my heart to resolve not to marry at all.

DORIMANT. Fie, fie! That would spoil a good jest and disappoint the well-natured town of an occasion of laughing at you.

YOUNG BELLAIR. The storm I have so long expected hangs o'er my head and begins to pour down upon me. I am on the rack and can have no rest till I'm satisfied in what I fear.—Where do you dine?

DORIMANT. At Long's or Locket's.

MEDLEY. At Long's let it be.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I'll run and see Emilia and inform myself how matters stand. If my misfortunes are not so great as to make me unfit for company, I'll be with you.

Exit BELLAIR

Enter a Footman *with a letter*

FOOTMAN. (*To* DORIMANT) Here's a letter, sir.

DORIMANT. The superscription's right: "For Mr. Dorimant."

MEDLEY. Let's see the very scrawl and spelling of a true-bred whore.

DORIMANT. I know the hand; the style is admirable, I assure you.

MEDLEY. Prithee, read it.

DORIMANT. (*Reads*)

I told a you you dud not love me, if you dud, you wou'd have seen me again ere now. I have no money and am very Mallicolly. Pray send me a Guynie to see the Operies.

Your Servant to Command,

Molly

MEDLEY. Pray, let the whore have a favorable answer, that she may spark it in a box and do honor to her profession.

DORIMANT. She shall, and perk up i'the face of quality. [*To* HANDY] Is the coach at the door?

HANDY. You did not bid me send for it.

(HANDY *offers to go out*)

DORIMANT. Eternal blockhead! Hey, sot—

HANDY. Did you call me, sir?

DORIMANT. I hope you have no just exception to the name, sir?

HANDY. I have sense, sir.

DORIMANT. Not so much as a fly in winter.—How did you come, Medley?

MEDLEY. In a chair.

FOOTMAN. [*To* DORIMANT] You may have a hackney coach if you please, sir.

DORIMANT. I may ride the elephant if you please, sir. Call another chair and let my coach follow to Long's. [*Exeunt, singing*]

Be calm, ye great parents, etc.

ACT II

SCENE I. [*In lodgings*]

Enter LADY TOWNLEY *and* EMILIA

LADY TOWNLEY. I was afraid, Emilia, all had been discovered.

EMILIA. I tremble with the apprehension still.

LADY TOWNLEY. That my brother should take lodgings i'the very house where you lie!

EMILIA. 'Twas lucky we had timely notice to warn the people to be secret. He seems to be a mighty good-humored old man.

LADY TOWNLEY. He ever had a notable smirking way with him.

EMILIA. He calls me "rogue," tells me he can't abide me, and does so bepat me.

LADY TOWNLEY. On my word, you are much in his favor then!

EMILIA. He has been very inquisitive, I am told, about my family, my reputation, and my fortune.

LADY TOWNLEY. I am confident he does not i'the least suspect you are the woman his son's in love with.

EMILIA. What should make him, then, inform himself so particularly of me?

LADY TOWNLEY. He was always of a very loving temper himself; it may be he has a doting fit upon him—who knows?

EMILIA. It cannot be!

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR

LADY TOWNLEY. Here comes my nephew. —Where did you leave your father?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Writing a note within. Emilia, this early visit looks as if some kind jealousy would not let you rest at home.

EMILIA. The knowledge I have of my rival gives me a little cause to fear your constancy.

YOUNG BELLAIR. My constancy! I vow—

EMILIA. Do not vow. Our love is frail as is our life and full as little in our power —and are you sure you shall outlive this day?

YOUNG BELLAIR. I am not; but when we are in perfect health, 'twere an idle thing to fright ourselves with the thoughts of sudden death.

LADY TOWNLEY. Pray, what has passed between you and your father i'the garden?

YOUNG BELLAIR. He's firm in his resolution, tells me I must marry Mrs. Harriet, or swears he'll marry himself and disinherit me. When I saw I could not prevail with him to be more indulgent, I dissembled an obedience to his will, which has composed his passion and will give us time—and I hope, opportunity—to deceive him.

Enter OLD BELLAIR *with a note in his hand*

LADY TOWNLEY. Peace, here he comes!

OLD BELLAIR. Harry, take this and let your man carry it for me to Mr. Forbes's chamber—my lawyer i'the Temple.

Exit YOUNG BELLAIR

(*To* EMILIA) Neighbor, a dod! I am glad to see thee here. Make much of her, sister; she's one of the best of your acquaintance. I like her countenance and her behavior well; she has a modesty that is not common i'this age—a dod, she has!

LADY TOWNLEY. I know her value, brother, and esteem her accordingly.

OLD BELLAIR. [*Aside*] Advise her to wear a little more mirth in her face; a dod, she's too serious.

LADY TOWNLEY. The fault is very excusable in a young woman.

OLD BELLAIR. Nay, a dod, I like her ne'er the worse. A melancholy beauty has her charms. I love a pretty sadness in a face, which varies now and then, like changeable colors, into a smile.

LADY TOWNLEY. Methinks you speak very feelingly, brother.

OLD BELLAIR. I am but five and fifty, sister, you know—an age not altogether unsensible.—(*To* EMILIA) Cheer up, sweetheart! I have a secret to tell thee may chance to make thee merry. We three will make collation together anon; i'the meantime, mum—I can't abide you! Go, I can't abide you.

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR

—Harry, come! You must along with me to my Lady Woodvill's.—I'm going to slip the boy at a mistress.

YOUNG BELLAIR. At a wife, sir, you would say. 91

OLD BELLAIR. You need not look so glum, sir; a wife is no curse when she brings the blessing of a good estate with her. But an idle town flirt, with a painted face, a rotten reputation, and a crazy fortune, a dod! is the devil and all, and such a one I hear you are in league with. 98

YOUNG BELLAIR. I cannot help detraction, sir.

OLD BELLAIR. Out! 'A pize o' their breeches, there are keeping-fools enough for such flaunting baggages, and they are e'en too good for 'em. (*To* EMILIA) Remember 'night.—[*To* YOUNG BELLAIR] Go! You're a rogue, you're a rogue!—Fare you well, fare you well!—Come, come! Come along, sir! 108

Exeunt OLD *and* YOUNG BELLAIR

LADY TOWNLEY. On my word, the old man comes on apace. I'll lay my life he's smitten.

EMILIA. This is nothing but the pleasantness of his humor.

LADY TOWNLEY. I know him better than you. Let it work; it may prove lucky. 115

Enter a Page

PAGE. Madam, Mr. Medley has sent to know whether a visit will not be troublesome this afternoon.

LADY TOWNLEY. Send him word his visits never are so. [*Exit* Page] 120

EMILIA. He's a very pleasant man.

LADY TOWNLEY. He's a very necessary man among us women; he's not scandalous i'the least, perpetually contriving to bring good company together, and always ready to stop up a gap at ombre. Then, he knows all the little news o'the town. 127

EMILIA. I love to hear him talk o'the intrigues. Let 'em be never so dull in themselves, he'll make 'em pleasant i'the relation.

LADY TOWNLEY. But he improves things so much one can take no measure of the truth from him. Mr. Dorimant swears a flea or a maggot is not made more monstrous by a magnifying glass than a story is by his telling it. 136

Enter MEDLEY

EMILIA. Hold, here he comes.

LADY TOWNLEY. Mr. Medley.

MEDLEY. Your servant, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY. You have made yourself a stranger of late. 141

EMILIA. I believe you took a surfeit of ombre last time you were here.

MEDLEY. Indeed, I had my belly full of that termagant, Lady Dealer. There never was so insatiable a carder; an old gleeker never loved to sit to't like her. I have played with her now at least a dozen times till she's worn out all her fine complexion and her tower[1] would keep in curl no longer.

LADY TOWNLEY. Blame her not. Poor woman, she loves nothing so well as a black ace. 153

MEDLEY. The pleasure I have seen her in when she has had hope in drawing for a matadore[2]!

EMILIA. 'Tis as pretty sport to her as persuading masks off is to you to make discoveries. 159

LADY TOWNLEY. Pray, where's your friend Mr. Dorimant?

MEDLEY. Soliciting his affairs; he's a man of great employment—has more mistresses now depending than the most eminent lawyer in England has causes.[3] 165

EMILIA. Here has been Mrs. Loveit so uneasy and out of humor these two days.

LADY TOWNLEY. How strangely love and jealousy rage in that poor woman! 169

MEDLEY. She could not have picked out a devil upon earth so proper to torment her; has made her break a dozen or two fans already, tear half a score points in pieces, and destroy hoods and knots without number.

1 A high headdress.
2 In ombre, one of the three principal trumps.
3 cases.

LADY TOWNLEY. We heard of a pleasant serenade he gave her t'other night.

MEDLEY. A Danish serenade with kettle-drums and trumpets.

EMILIA. Oh, barbarous!

MEDLEY. What! You are of the number of the ladies whose ears are grown so delicate since our operas you can be charmed with nothing but *flutes-douces*[1] and French hautboys[2]?

EMILIA. Leave your raillery, and tell us is there any new wit come forth—songs or novels?

MEDLEY. A very pretty piece of gallantry, by an eminent author, called *The Diversions of Brussels*, very necessary to be read by all old ladies who are desirous to improve themselves at questions and commands, blindman's buff, and the like fashionable recreations.

EMILIA. Oh, ridiculous!

MEDLEY. Then there is *The Art of Affectation*, written by a late beauty of quality, teaching you how to draw up your breasts, stretch out your neck, to thrust out your breech, to play with your head, to toss up your nose, to bite your lips, to turn up your eyes, to speak in a silly, soft tone of a voice, and use all the foolish French words that will infallibly make your person and conversation charming—with a short apology at the latter end in the behalf of young ladies who notoriously wash and paint though they have naturally good complexions.

EMILIA. What a deal of stuff you tell us!

MEDLEY. Such as the town affords, madam. The Russians, hearing the great respect we have for foreign dancing, have lately sent over some of their best balladines,[3] who are now practising a famous ballet which will be suddenly[4] danced at the Bear Garden.

LADY TOWNLEY. Pray, forbear your idle stories, and give us an account of the state of love as it now stands.

MEDLEY. Truly, there have been some revolutions in those affairs—great chopping and changing among the old, and some new lovers whom malice, indiscretion, and misfortune have luckily brought into play.

LADY TOWNLEY. What think you of walking into the next room and sitting down before you engage in this business?

MEDLEY. I wait upon you, and I hope (though women are commonly unreasonable) by the plenty of scandal I shall discover, to give you very good content, ladies. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. [*The dressing-room of* MISTRESS LOVEIT]

Enter MRS. LOVEIT *and* PERT, *her* Maid. MRS. LOVEIT *puts up a letter, then draws out a pocket-glass and looks at it*

MRS. LOVEIT. Pert.

PERT. Madam?

MRS. LOVEIT. I hate myself, I look so ill to-day.

PERT. Hate the wicked cause on't, that base man Mr. Dorimant, who makes you torment and vex yourself continually.

MRS. LOVEIT. He is to blame, indeed.

PERT. —To blame to be two days without sending, writing, or coming near you, contrary to his oath and covenant! 'Twas to much purpose to make him swear! I'll lay my life there's not an article but he has broken—talked to the vizards i'the pit, waited upon the ladies from the boxes to their coaches, gone behind the scenes, and fawned upon those little insignificant creatures, the players. 'Tis impossible for a man of his inconstant temper to forbear, I'm sure.

MRS. LOVEIT. I know he is a devil, but he has something of the angel yet undefaced in him, which makes him so charming and agreeable that I must love him, be he never so wicked.

PERT. I little thought, madam, to see your spirit tamed to this degree, who banished poor Mr. Lackwit but for taking up another lady's fan in your presence.

MRS. LOVEIT. My knowing of such odious fools contributes to the making of me love Dorimant the better.

1 A high-pitched flute.
2 The modern oboe.
3 Theatrical dancers.
4 soon.

PERT. Your knowing of Mr. Dorimant, in my mind, should rather make you hate all mankind.

MRS. LOVEIT. So it does—besides himself.

PERT. Pray, what excuse does he make in his letter? 37

MRS. LOVEIT. He has had business.

PERT. Business in general terms would not have been a current excuse for another. A modish man is always "very busy" when he is in pursuit of a new mistress. 42

MRS. LOVEIT. Some fop has bribed you to rail at him. He had business; I will believe it, and will forgive him. 45

PERT. You may forgive him anything, but I shall never forgive him his turning me into ridicule, as I hear he does.

MRS. LOVEIT. I perceive you are of the number of those fools his wit had made his enemies. 51

PERT. I am of the number of those he's pleased to rally, madam, and if we may believe Mr. Wagfan and Mr. Caperwell, he sometimes makes merry with yourself too, among his laughing companions. 56

MRS. LOVEIT. Blockheads are as malicious to witty men as ugly women are to the handsome; 'tis their interest, and they make it their business to defame 'em. 60

PERT. I wish Mr. Dorimant would not make it his business to defame you.

MRS. LOVEIT. Should he, I had rather be made infamous by him than owe my reputation to the dull discretion of those fops you talk of. 66

Enter BELLINDA

—Bellinda! (*Running to her*)

BELLINDA. My dear!

MRS. LOVEIT. You have been unkind of late. 70

BELLINDA. Do not say unkind—say unhappy.

MRS. LOVEIT. I could chide you. Where have you been these two days? 74

BELLINDA. Pity me rather, my dear; where I have been so tired with two or three country gentlemen, whose conversation has been more unsufferable than a country fiddle.

MRS. LOVEIT. Are they relations? 79

BELLINDA. No; Welsh acquaintance[1] I made when I was last year at St. Winifred's. They have asked me a thousand questions of the modes and intrigues of the town, and I have told 'em almost as many things for news that hardly were so when their gowns were in fashion. 86

MRS. LOVEIT. Provoking creatures! How could you endure 'em?

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) Now to carry on my plot. Nothing but love could make me capable of so much falsehood. 'Tis time to begin, lest Dorimant should come before her jealousy has stung her. (*Laughs, and then speaks on*) I was yesterday at a play with 'em, where I was fain to show 'em the living as the man at Westminster does the dead: "That is Mrs. Such-a-one, admired for her beauty; that is Mr. Such-a-one, cried up for a wit; that is sparkish Mr. Such-a-one, who was lately cast off by my Lord Such-a-one."

MRS. LOVEIT. Did you see Dorimant there? 102

BELLINDA. I did, and imagine you were with him and have no mind to own it.

MRS. LOVEIT. What should make you think so? 106

BELLINDA. A lady masked in a pretty dishabille, whom Dorimant entertained with more respect than the gallants do a common vizard. 110

MRS. LOVEIT. (*Aside*) Dorimant at the play entertaining a mask! Oh, heavens!

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) Good!

MRS. LOVEIT. Did he stay all the while?

BELLINDA. Till the play was done and then led her out, which confirms me it was you.

MRS. LOVEIT. Traitor! 117

PERT. Now you may believe he has business, and you may forgive him too.

MRS. LOVEIT. Ungrateful, perjured man!

BELLINDA. You seem so much concerned, my dear, I fear I have told you unawares what I had better have concealed for your quiet. 124

MRS. LOVEIT. What manner of shape had she?

[1] Made informally.

BELLINDA. Tall and slender. Her motions were very genteel; certainly she must be some person of condition.

MRS. LOVEIT. Shame and confusion be ever in her face when she shows it!

BELLINDA. I should blame your discretion for loving that wild man, my dear, but they say he has a way so bewitching that few can defend their hearts who know him.

MRS. LOVEIT. I will tear him out from mine or die i'the attempt.

BELLINDA. Be more moderate.

MRS. LOVEIT. Would I had daggers, darts, or poisoned arrows in my breast, so I could but remove the thoughts of him from thence!

BELLINDA. Fie, fie! your transports are too violent, my dear; this may be but an accidental gallantry, and 'tis likely ended at her coach.

PERT. Should it proceed farther, let your comfort be, the conduct Mr. Dorimant affects will quickly make you known her rival, ten to one let you see her ruined, her reputation exposed to the town—a happiness none will envy her but yourself, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. Whoe'er she be, all the harm I wish her is, may she love him as well as I do and may he give her as much cause to hate him.

PERT. Never doubt the latter end of your curse, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. May all the passions that are raised by neglected love—jealousy, indignation, spite, and thirst of revenge—eternally rage in her soul as they do now in mine. (*Walks up and down with a distracted air*)

Enter a Page

PAGE. Madam, Master Dorimant—

MRS. LOVEIT. I will not see him.

PAGE. I told him you were within, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. Say you lied—say I'm busy; shut the door!—Say anything!

PAGE. He's here, madam.

Enter DORIMANT

DORIMANT. They taste of death who do
at heaven arrive;
But we this paradise approach alive.

[*To* MISTRESS LOVEIT] What, dancing the galloping nag without a fiddle? (*Offers to catch her by the hand. She flings away and walks on, he pursuing her*) I fear this restlessness of the body, madam, proceeds from an unquietness of the mind. What unlucky accident puts you out of humor?—A point ill washed, knots spoiled i'the making up, hair shaded awry, or some other little mistake in setting you in order?

PERT. A trifle, in your opinion, sir, more inconsiderable than any you mention.

DORIMANT. O Mrs. Pert! I never knew you sullen enough to be silent; come, let me know the business.

PERT. The business, sir, is the business that has taken you up these two days. How have I seen you laugh at men of business, and now to become a man of business yourself!

DORIMANT. We are not masters of our affections; our inclinations daily alter. Now we love pleasure, and anon we shall dote on business. Human frailty will have it so, and who can help it?

MRS. LOVEIT. Faithless, inhuman, barbarous man—

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] Good! Now the alarm strikes.—

MRS. LOVEIT. —Without sense of love, of honor, or of gratitude, tell me, for I will know, what devil masked she was you were with at the play yesterday?

DORIMANT. Faith, I resolved as much as you, but the devil was obstinate and would not tell me.

MRS. LOVEIT. False in this as in your vows to me! You do know.

DORIMANT. The truth is, I did all I could to know.

MRS. LOVEIT. And dare you own it to my face? Hell and furies! (*Tears her fan in pieces*)

DORIMANT. Spare your fan, madam; you are growing hot and will want it to cool you.

MRS. LOVEIT. Horror and distraction seize you! Sorrow and remorse gnaw your soul, and punish all your perjuries to me—(*Weeps*)

DORIMANT. So thunder breaks the cloud in twain
And makes a passage for the rain.
(*Turning to Bellinda*) Bellinda, you are the devil that has raised this storm; you were at the play yesterday and have been making discoveries to your dear.

BELLINDA. You're the most mistaken man i'the world.

DORIMANT. It must be so, and here I vow revenge—resolve to pursue and persecute you more impertinently than ever any loving fop did his mistress, hunt you i'the park, trace you i'the Mall, dog you in every visit you make, haunt you at the plays and i'the drawing-room, hang my nose in your neck and talk to you whether you will or no, and ever look upon you with such dying eyes till your friends grow jealous of me, send you out of town, and the world suspect your reputation. (*In a lower voice, looking kindly at* BELLINDA)—At my Lady Townley's when we go from hence.

BELLINDA. I'll meet you there.

DORIMANT. Enough.

MRS. LOVEIT. Stand off! (*Pushing* DORIMANT *away*) You shall not stare upon her so.

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] Good; there's one made jealous already.

MRS. LOVEIT. Is this the constancy you vowed?

DORIMANT. Constancy at my years? 'Tis not a virtue in season; you might as well expect the fruit the autumn ripens i'the spring.

MRS. LOVEIT. Monstrous principle!

DORIMANT. Youth has a long journey to go, madam; should I have set up my rest[1] at the first inn I lodged at, I should never have arrived at the happiness I now enjoy.

MRS. LOVEIT. Dissembler, damned dissembler!

DORIMANT. I am so, I confess. Good nature and good manners corrupt me. I am honest in my inclinations, and would not, wer't not to avoid offence, make a lady in years believe I think her young—willfully mistake art for nature—and seem as fond of a thing I am weary of as when I doted on't in earnest.

MRS. LOVEIT. False man!

DORIMANT. True woman!

MRS. LOVEIT. Now you begin to show yourself.

DORIMANT. Love gilds us over and makes us show fine things to one another for a time. but soon the gold wears off and then again the native brass appears.

MRS. LOVEIT. Think on your oaths, your vows, and protestations, perjured man!

DORIMANT. I made 'em when I was in love.

MRS. LOVEIT. And therefore ought they not to bind? Oh, impious!

DORIMANT. What we swear at such a time may be a certain proof of a present passion, but to say truth, in love there is no security to be given for the future.

MRS. LOVEIT. Horrid and ungrateful! Begone, and never see me more!

DORIMANT. I am not one of those troublesome coxcombs who, because they were once well received, take the privilege to plague a woman with their love ever after. I shall obey you, madam, though I do myself some violence. (*He offers to go and* MRS. LOVEIT *pulls him back*)

MRS. LOVEIT. Come back! You shall not go! Could you have the ill-nature to offer it?

DORIMANT. When love grows diseased, the best thing we can do is to put it to a violent death. I cannot endure the torture of a ling'ring and consumptive passion.

MRS. LOVEIT. Can you think mine sickly?

DORIMANT. Oh, it is desperately ill. What worse symptoms are there than your being always uneasy when I visit you, your picking quarrels with me on slight occasions, and in my absence kindly list'ning to the impertinences of every fashionable fool that talks to you?

MRS. LOVEIT. What fashionable fool can you lay to my charge?

DORIMANT. Why, the very cock-fool of all those fools—Sir Fopling Flutter.

MRS. LOVEIT. I never saw him in my life but once.

[1] To take up one's abode.

DORIMANT. The worse woman you, at first sight to put on all your charms, to entertain him with that softness in your voice, and all that wanton kindness in your eyes you so notoriously affect when you design a conquest.

MRS. LOVEIT. So damned a lie did never malice yet invent. Who told you this?

DORIMANT. No matter. That ever I should love a woman that can dote on a senseless caper, a tawdry French ribband, and a formal cravat!

MRS. LOVEIT. You make me mad.

DORIMANT. A guilty conscience may do much. Go on—be the game-mistress o' the town, and enter all our young fops as fast as they come from travel.

MRS. LOVEIT. Base and scurrilous!

DORIMANT. A fine mortifying reputation 'twill be for a woman of your pride, wit, and quality!

MRS. LOVEIT. This jealousy's a mere pretence, a cursed trick of your own devising.—I know you.

DORIMANT. Believe it and all the ill of me you can, I would not have a woman have the least good thought of me, that can think well of Fopling. Farewell! Fall to, and much good may you do with your coxcomb.

MRS. LOVEIT. Stay! Oh stay! and I will tell you all!

DORIMANT. I have been told too much already. *Exit* DORIMANT

MRS. LOVEIT. Call him again!

PERT. E'en let him go—a fair riddance.

MRS. LOVEIT. Run I say! Call him again! I will have him called!

PERT. [*Aside*] The devil should call him away first were it my concern. *Exit* PERT

BELLINDA. He's frightened me from the very thoughts of loving men. For heaven's sake, my dear, do not discover what I told you! I dread his tongue as much as you ought to have done his friendship.

[*Re-*]*enter* PERT

PERT. He's gone, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. Lightning blast him!

PERT. When I told him you desired him to come back, he smiled, made a mouth at me, flung into his coach, and said—

MRS. LOVEIT. What did he say?

PERT. "Drive away!" and then repeated verses.

MRS. LOVEIT. Would I had made a contract to be a witch when first I entertained this greater devil! Monster, barbarian! I could tear myself in pieces. Revenge—nothing but revenge can ease me! Plague, War, Famine, Fire—all that can bring universal ruin and misery on mankind, with joy I'd perish to have you in my power but this moment! *Exit* MRS. LOVEIT

PERT. Follow, madam; leave her not in this outrageous passion! [PERT *gathers up the things and starts out*]

BELLINDA. He's given me the proof which I desired of his love, but 'tis a proof of his ill-nature too. I wish I had not seen him use her so.

I sigh to think that Dorimant may be
One day as faithless and unkind to me.

[*Exit*]

ACT III

SCENE I. LADY WOODVILL'S *lodgings*

Enter HARRIET *and* BUSY, *her woman*

BUSY. Dear madam, let me see that curl in order.

HARRIET. Let me alone; I will shake 'em all out of order.

BUSY. Will you never leave this wildness?

HARRIET. Torment me not.

BUSY. Look! There's a knot falling off.

HARRIET. Let it drop.

BUSY. But one pin, dear madam.

HARRIET. How do I daily suffer under thy officious fingers!

BUSY. Ah, the difference that is between you and my Lady Dapper! How uneasy she is if the least thing be amiss about her!

HARRIET. She is indeed most exact; nothing is ever wanting to make her ugliness remarkable.

BUSY. Jeering people say so.

HARRIET. Her powdering, painting, and her patching never fail in public to draw the tongues and eyes of all the men upon her.

BUSY. She is, indeed, a little too pretending.

HARRIET. That women should set up for beauty as much in spite of nature as some men have done for wit!

BUSY. I hope without offence one may endeavor to make one's self agreeable.

HARRIET. Not when 'tis impossible. Women then ought to be no more fond of dressing than fools should be of talking; hoods and modesty, masks and silence—things that shadow and conceal—they should think of nothing else.

BUSY. Jesu! Madam, what will your mother think is become of you? For heaven's sake go in again!

HARRIET. I won't.

BUSY. This is the extravagant'st thing that ever you did in your life, to leave her and a gentleman who is to be your husband.

HARRIET. My husband! Hast thou so little wit to think I spoke what I meant when I overjoyed her in the country with a low curtsey and "What you please, madam; I shall ever be obedient"?

BUSY. Nay, I know not, you have so many fetches.[1]

HARRIET. And this was one to get her up to London—nothing else, I assure thee.

BUSY. Well, the man, in my mind, is a fine man.

HARRIET. The man indeed wears his clothes fashionably and has a pretty, negligent way with him, very courtly and much affected; he bows, and talks, and smiles so agreeably as he thinks.

BUSY. I never saw anything so genteel.

HARRIET. Varnished over with good breeding, many a blockhead makes a tolerable show.

BUSY. I wonder you do not like him.

HARRIET. I think I might be brought to endure him, and that is all a reasonable woman should expect in a husband; but there is duty i'the case, and like the haughty Merab

I find much aversion in my stubborn mind,
Which is bred by being promised and designed.

BUSY. I wish you do not design your own ruin! I partly guess your inclinations, madam—that Mr. Dorimant—[*She sings*]

SONG

When first Amintas charmed my heart,
My heedless sheep began to stray;
The wolves soon stole the greatest part,
And all will now be made a prey.

Ah, let not love your thoughts possess,
'Tis fatal to a shepherdess;
The dang'rous passion you must shun,
Or else like me be quite undone.

HARRIET. Shall I be paid down by a covetous parent for a purchase? I need no land; no, I'll lay myself out all in love. It is decreed—

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR

YOUNG BELLAIR. What generous resolution are you in making, madam?

HARRIET. Only to be disobedient, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Let me join hands with you in that—

HARRIET. With all my heart. I never thought I should have given you mine so willingly. Here I, Harriet—

YOUNG BELLAIR. And I, Harry—

HARRIET. Do solemnly protest—

YOUNG BELLAIR. And vow—

HARRIET. That I with you—

YOUNG BELLAIR. And I with you—

BOTH. Will never marry.

HARRIET. A match!

YOUNG BELLAIR. And no match! How do you like this indifference now?

HARRIET. You expect I should take it ill, I see.

YOUNG BELLAIR. 'Tis not unnatural for you women to be a little angry [when] you miss a conquest, though you would slight the poor man were he in your power.

[1] stratagems.

HARRIET. There are some, it may be, have an eye like Bart'lomew—big enough for the whole fair; but I am not of the number, and you may keep your gingerbread. 'Twill be more acceptable to the lady whose dear image it wears, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR. But I confess, madam, you came a day after the fair.

HARRIET. You own then you are in love?

YOUNG BELLAIR. I do.

HARRIET. The confidence is generous, and in return I could almost find in my heart to let you know my inclinations.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Are you in love?

HARRIET. Yes, with this dear town, to that degree I can scarce endure the country in landscapes and hangings.

YOUNG BELLAIR. What a dreadful thing 'twould be to be hurried back to Hampshire!

HARRIET. Ah, name it not!

YOUNG BELLAIR. As for us, I find we shall agree well enough. Would we could do something to deceive the grave people!

HARRIET. Could we delay their quick proceeding, 'twere well. A reprieve is a good step towards the getting of a pardon.

YOUNG BELLAIR. If we give over the game, we are undone. What think you of playing it on booty?

HARRIET. What do you mean?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Pretend to be in love with one another; 'twill make some dilatory excuses we may feign, pass the better.

HARRIET. Let us do't, if it be but for the dear pleasure of dissembling.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Can you play your part?

HARRIET. I know not what it is to love, but I have made pretty remarks[1] by being now and then where lovers meet. Where did you leave your gravities?

YOUNG BELLAIR. I'th' next room! Your mother was censuring our modern gallant.

Enter OLD BELLAIR *and* LADY WOODVILL

HARRIET. Peace! Here they come; I will lean against this wall and look bashfully down upon my fan, while you, like an amorous spark, modishly entertain me.

LADY WOODVILL. [*To* OLD BELLAIR] Never go about to excuse 'em; come, come, it was not so when I was a young woman.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, they're something disrespectful—

LADY WOODVILL. Quality was then considered and not rallied by every fleering fellow.

OLD BELLAIR. Youth will have its jest —a dod, it will.

LADY WOODVILL. 'Tis good breeding now to be civil to none but players and Exchange women; they are treated by 'em as much above their condition as others are below theirs.

OLD BELLAIR. Out! A pize on 'em; talk no more! The rogues ha' got an ill habit of preferring beauty no matter where they find it.

LADY WOODVILL. See your son and my daughter; they have improved their acquaintance since they were within.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, methinks they have! Let's keep back and observe.

YOUNG BELLAIR. [*To* HARRIET] Now for a look and gestures that may persuade 'em I am saying all the passionate things imaginable—

HARRIET. Your head a little more on one side. Ease yourself on your left leg and play with your right hand.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Thus, is it not?

HARRIET. Now set your right leg firm on the ground, adjust your belt, then look about you.

YOUNG BELLAIR. A little exercising will make me perfect.

HARRIET. Smile, and turn to me again very sparkish.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Will you take your turn and be instructed?

HARRIET. With all my heart!

YOUNG BELLAIR. At one motion play your fan, roll your eyes, and then settle a kind look upon me.

HARRIET. So!

YOUNG BELLAIR. Now spread your fan, look down upon it, and tell the sticks with a finger.

[1] notes.

HARRIET. Very modish!

YOUNG BELLAIR. Clap your hand up to your bosom, hold down your gown, shrug a little, draw up your breasts, and let 'em fall again gently, with a sigh or two—

HARRIET. By the instructions you give, I suspect you for one of those malicious observers who watch people's eyes, and from innocent looks make scandalous conclusions. 212

YOUNG BELLAIR. I know some, indeed, who out of mere love to mischief are as vigilant as jealousy itself, and will give you an account of every glance that passes at a play and i'th' Circle.

HARRIET. 'Twill not be amiss now to seem a little pleasant. 219

YOUNG BELLAIR. Clap your fan, then, in both your hands—snatch it to your mouth—smile—and with a lively motion fling your body a little forwards. So! Now spread it—fall back on the sudden—cover your face with it and break out into loud laughter. Take up! look grave and fall a-fanning of yourself.—Admirably well acted! 228

HARRIET. I think I am pretty apt at these matters.

OLD BELLAIR. [*To* LADY WOODVILL] A dod, I like this well!

LADY WOODVILL. This promises something. 234

OLD BELLAIR. Come! there is love i'th' case—a dod there is, or will be.—[*To* HARRIET] What say you, young lady?

YOUNG BELLAIR. All in good time, sir; you expect we should fall to and love as game-cocks fight, as soon as we are set together? A dod, you're unreasonable! 241

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, sirrah, I like thy wit well.

Enter a Servant

SERVANT. The coach is at the door, madam. 245

OLD BELLAIR. Go! get you and take the air together.

LADY WOODVILL. Will not you go with us?

OLD BELLAIR. Out, a pize! A dod, I ha' business and cannot. We shall meet at night at my sister Townley's. 252

YOUNG BELLAIR. (*Aside*) He's going to Emilia. I overheard him talk of a collation.

Exeunt

SCENE II. LADY TOWNLEY'S *drawing-room*

Enter LADY TOWNLEY, EMILIA, *and* MR. MEDLEY

LADY TOWNLEY. I pity the young lovers we last talked of, though to say truth their conduct has been so discreet they deserve to be unfortunate. 4

MEDLEY. Y'have had an exact account, from the great lady i'th' box down to the little orange wench.

EMILIA. You're a living libel—a breathing lampoon. I wonder you are not torn in pieces.

MEDLEY. What think you of setting up an office of intelligence for these matters? The project may get money. 12

LADY TOWNLEY. You would have great dealings with country ladies.

Enter BELLINDA

MEDLEY. More than Muddiman has with their husbands.

LADY TOWNLEY. Bellinda, what had been become of you? We have not seen you here of late with your friend Mrs. Loveit. 19

BELLINDA. Dear creature, I have left her but now so sadly afflicted!

LADY TOWNLEY. With her old distemper, jealousy?

MEDLEY. Dorimant has played her some new prank. 25

BELLINDA. Well, that Dorimant is certainly the worst man breathing.

EMILIA. I once thought so.

BELLINDA. And do you not think so still?

EMILIA. No, indeed! 30

BELLINDA. Oh, Jesu!

EMILIA. The town does him a great injury, and I will never believe what it says of a man I do not know again, for his sake.

BELLINDA. You make me wonder.

LADY TOWNLEY. He 's a very well-bred man.

BELLINDA. But strangely ill natured.

EMILIA. Then, he's a very witty man.

BELLINDA. But a man of no principles.

MEDLEY. Your man of principles is a very fine thing, indeed.

BELLINDA. —To be preferred to men of parts by women who have regard to their reputation and quiet. Well, were I minded to play the fool, he should be the last man I'd think of.

MEDLEY. He has been the first in many ladies' favors, though you are so severe, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY. What he may be for a lover, I know not; but he's a very pleasant acquaintance, I am sure.

BELLINDA. Had you seen him use Mrs. Loveit as I have done, you would never endure him more.

EMILIA. What, has he quarreled with her again?

BELLINDA. Upon the slightest occasion; he's jealous of Sir Fopling.

LADY TOWNLEY. She never saw him in her life but yesterday, and that was here.

EMILIA. On my conscience, he's the only man in town that's her aversion! How horribly out of humor she was all the time he talked to her!

BELLINDA. And somebody has wickedly told him—

EMILIA. Here he comes.

Enter DORIMANT

MEDLEY. Dorimant! you are luckily come to justify yourself.—Here's a lady—

BELLINDA. [*Approaching him*] Has a word or two to say to you from a disconsolate person.

DORIMANT. You tender your reputation too much, I know, madam, to whisper with me before this good company.

BELLINDA. To serve Mrs. Loveit I'll make a bold venture.

DORIMANT. Here 's Medley—the very spirit of scandal.

BELLINDA. No matter!

EMILIA. 'Tis something you are unwilling to hear, Mr. Dorimant.

LADY TOWNLEY. Tell him, Bellinda, whether he will or no.

BELLINDA. (*Aloud*) Mrs. Loveit—

DORIMANT. Softly! these are laughers; you do not know 'em.

BELLINDA. (*To* DORIMANT *apart*) In a word, you've made me hate you, which I thought you never could have done.

DORIMANT. —In obeying your commands.

BELLINDA. 'Twas a cruel part you played. How could you act it?

DORIMANT. Nothing is cruel to a man who could kill himself to please you. Remember five o'clock to-morrow morning!

BELLINDA. I tremble when you name it.

DORIMANT. Be sure you come!

BELLINDA. I shan't.

DORIMANT. Swear you will!

BELLINDA. I dare not.

DORIMANT. Swear, I say!

BELLINDA. By my life—by all the happiness I hope for—

DORIMANT. You will.

BELLINDA. I will!

DORIMANT. Kind!

BELLINDA. I am glad I've sworn. I vow, I think I should ha' failed you else!

DORIMANT. Surprisingly kind! In what temper did you leave Loveit?

BELLINDA. Her raving was prettily over, and she began to be in a brave way of defying you and all your works. Where have you been since you went from thence?

DORIMANT. I looked in at the play.

BELLINDA. I have promised, and must return to her again.

DORIMANT. Persuade her to walk in the Mall this evening.

BELLINDA. She hates the place and will not come.

DORIMANT. Do all you can to prevail with her.

BELLINDA. For what purpose?

DORIMANT. Sir Fopling will be here anon; I'll prepare him to set upon her there before me.

BELLINDA. You persecute her too much—but I'll do all you'll ha' me.

DORIMANT. [*Aloud*] Tell her plainly 'tis grown too dull a business; I can drudge no longer.

EMILIA. There are afflictions in love, Mr. Dorimant.

DORIMANT. You women make 'em, who are commonly as unreasonable in that as you are at play. Without the advantage be on your side, a man can never quietly give over when he's weary.

MEDLEY. If you would play without being obliged to complaisance, Dorimant, you should play in public places.

DORIMANT. Ordinaries were a very good thing for that, but gentlemen do not of late frequent 'em. The deep play is now in private houses.

(BELLINDA *starts to leave*)

LADY TOWNLEY. Bellinda, are you leaving us so soon?

BELLINDA. I am going to the Park with Mrs. Loveit, madam. *Exit* BELLINDA

LADY TOWNLEY. This confidence will go nigh to spoil this young creature.

MEDLEY. 'Twill do her good, madam. Young men who are bred up under practicing lawyers prove the abler counsel when they come to be called to the bar themselves.

DORIMANT. The town has been very favorable to you this afternoon, my Lady Townley; you used to have an *embarras*[1] of chairs and coaches at your door, an uproar of footmen in your hall, and a noise of fools above here.

LADY TOWNLEY. Indeed, my house is the general rendezvous, and next to the playhouse is the common refuge of all the young, idle people.

EMILIA. Company is a very good thing, madam, but I wonder you do not love it a little more chosen.

LADY TOWNLEY. 'Tis good to have an universal taste; we should love wit, but for variety be able to divert ourselves with the extravagancies of those who want it.

MEDLEY. Fools will make you laugh.

EMILIA. For once or twice, but the repetition of their folly after a visit or two grows tedious and unsufferable.

Enter a Page

PAGE. Sir Fopling Flutter, madam, desires to know if you are to be seen.

LADY TOWNLEY. Here's the freshest fool in town, and one who has not cloyed you yet.—Page!

PAGE. Madam?

LADY TOWNLEY. Desire him to walk up.

DORIMANT. Do not fall on him, Medley, and snub him. Soothe him up in his extravagance; he will show the better.

MEDLEY. You know I have a natural indulgence for fools and need not this caution, sir.

Enter SIR FOPLING FLUTTER *with his* Page *after him*

SIR FOPLING. Page, wait without. [*To* LADY TOWNLEY] Madam, I kiss your hands. I see yesterday was nothing of chance; the *belles assemblées*[2] form themselves here every day. (*To* EMILIA) Lady, your servant. —Dorimant, let me embrace thee! Without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance who retain so much of Paris as thou dost—the very air thou hadst when the marquise mistook thee i'th' Tuileries and cried, "Hey, Chevalier!" and then begged thy pardon.

DORIMANT. I would fain wear in fashion as long as I can, sir; 'tis a thing to be valued in men as well as baubles.

SIR FOPLING. Thou art a man of wit and understandst the town. Prithee, let thee and I be intimate; there is no living without making some good man the confidant of our pleasures.

DORIMANT. 'Tis true! but there is no man so improper for such a business as I am.

SIR FOPLING. Prithee, why hast thou so modest an opinion of thyself?

DORIMANT. Why, first, I could never keep a secret in my life; and then, there is no charm so infallibly makes me fall in love

1 crush.

2 fair assemblies.

with a woman as my knowing a friend loves her.—I deal honestly with you.

SIR FOPLING. Thy humor's very gallant, or let me perish! I knew a French count so like you!

LADY TOWNLEY. Wit, I perceive, has more power over you than beauty, Sir Fopling, else you would not have let this lady stand so long neglected.

SIR FOPLING. (*To* EMILIA) A thousand pardons, madam; some civility's due of course upon the meeting a long absent friend. The *éclat*[1] of so much beauty, I confess, ought to have charmed me sooner.

EMILIA. The *brillant*[2] of so much good language, sir, has much more power than the little beauty I can boast.

SIR FOPLING. I never saw anything prettier than this high work on your *point d'Espagne*.[3]

EMILIA. 'Tis not so rich as *point de Venise*.

SIR FOPLING. Not altogether, but looks cooler and is more proper for the season.—Dorimant, is not that Medley?

DORIMANT. The same, sir.

SIR FOPLING. Forgive me, sir; in this *embarras* of civilities I could not come to have you in my arms sooner! You understand an equipage the best of any man in town, I hear.

MEDLEY. By my own you would not guess it.

SIR FOPLING. There are critics who do not write, sir.

MEDLEY. Our peevish poets will scarce allow it.

SIR FOPLING. Damn 'em, they'll allow no man wit who doesn't play the fool like themselves and show it! Have you taken notice of the *calèche* I brought over?

MEDLEY. Oh, yes! It has quite another air than the English makes.

SIR FOPLING. 'Tis as easily known from an English tumbril as an Inns of Court man is from one of us.

DORIMANT. True; there is a *bel air*[4] in *calèches* as well as men.

MEDLEY. But there are few so delicate to observe it.

SIR FOPLING. The world is generally very *grossier*[5] here, indeed.

LADY TOWNLEY. [*Aside*] He's very fine.

EMILIA. Extreme proper.

SIR FOPLING. [*Turning about to display his costume*] A slight suit I made to appear at my first arrival—not worthy your consideration, ladies.

DORIMANT. The pantaloon is very well mounted.

SIR FOPLING. The tassels are new and pretty.

MEDLEY. I never saw a coat better cut.

SIR FOPLING. It makes me show long waisted, and, I think, slender.

DORIMANT. That's the shape our ladies dote on.

MEDLEY. Your breech, though, is a handful too high, in my eye, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. Peace, Medley! I have wished it lower a thousand times, but a pox on't! 'twill not be.

LADY TOWNLEY. His gloves are well fringed, large, and graceful.

SIR FOPLING. I was always eminent for being *bien ganté*.[6]

EMILIA. He wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris.

SIR FOPLING. You are in the right, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY. The suit?

SIR FOPLING. Barroy.

EMILIA. The garniture?

SIR FOPLING. Le Gras.

MEDLEY. The shoes?

SIR FOPLING. Piccar.

DORIMANT. The periwig?

SIR FOPLING. Chedreux.

LADY TOWNLEY. } The gloves?
EMILIA. }

SIR FOPLING. Orangerie—you know the smell, ladies.—Dorimant, I could find in my heart for an amusement to have a gallantry with some of the English ladies.

DORIMANT. 'Tis a thing no less necessary to confirm the reputation of your wit than

1 radiance. 2 brilliancy. 3 Spanish point lace. 4 fine style. 5 boorish. 6 well gloved.

a duel will be to satisfy the town of your courage.

SIR FOPLING. Here was a woman yesterday—

DORIMANT. Mistress Loveit?

SIR FOPLING. You have named her!

DORIMANT. You cannot pitch on a better for your purpose.

SIR FOPLING. Prithee, what is she?

DORIMANT. A person of quality, and one who has a rest of reputation enough to make the conquest considerable; besides, I hear she likes you too.

SIR FOPLING. Methoughts she seemed, though, very reserved and uneasy all the time I entertained her.

DORIMANT. Grimace and affectation! You will see her in the Mall to-night.

SIR FOPLING. Prithee, let thee and I take the air together.

DORIMANT. I am engaged to Medley, but I'll meet you at Saint James's and give you some information upon the which you may regulate your proceedings.

SIR FOPLING. All the world will be in the Park to-night. Ladies, 'twere pity to keep so much beauty longer within doors and rob the Ring of all those charms that should adorn it.—Hey, page!

Enter Page

See that all my people be ready.

[*Exit* Page]

—Dorimant, *au revoir.*

[*Exit* SIR FOPLING]

MEDLEY. A fine, mettled coxcomb.

DORIMANT. Brisk and insipid.

MEDLEY. Pert and dull.

EMILIA. However you despise him, gentlemen, I'll lay my life he passes for a wit with many.

DORIMANT. That may very well be; Nature has her cheats, stums[1] a brain, and puts sophisticate dulness often on the tasteless multitude for true wit and good humor. Medley, come!

MEDLEY. I must go a little way; I will meet you i'the Mall.

DORIMANT. I'll walk through the Garden thither.—(*To the women*) We shall meet anon and bow.

LADY TOWNLEY. Not to-night. We are engaged about a business the knowledge of which may make you laugh hereafter.

MEDLEY. Your servant, ladies.

DORIMANT. "A revoir," as Sir Fopling says. [*Exeunt* DORIMANT *and* MEDLEY]

LADY TOWNLEY. The old man will be here immediately.

EMILIA. Let's expect[2] him i'th' garden.

LADY TOWNLEY. Go! you are a rogue.

EMILIA. I can't abide you. *Exeunt*

SCENE III. *The Mall*

Enter HARRIET *and* YOUNG BELLAIR, *she pulling him*

HARRIET. Come along.

YOUNG BELLAIR. And leave your mother?

HARRIET. Busy will be sent with a hue and cry after us, but that's no matter.

YOUNG BELLAIR. 'Twill look strangely in me.

HARRIET. She'll believe it a freak of mine and never blame your manners.

YOUNG BELLAIR. [*Looking back, off stage*] What reverend acquaintance is that she has met?

HARRIET. A fellow-beauty of the last king's time, though by the ruins you would hardly guess it.

[*Exeunt* HARRIET *and* YOUNG BELLAIR]

Enter DORIMANT, *who crosses the stage and passes out*

[*Re-*]*enter* HARRIET *and* YOUNG BELLAIR

YOUNG BELLAIR. By this time your mother is in a fine taking.

HARRIET. If your friend Mr. Dorimant were but here now, that she might find me talking with him!

YOUNG BELLAIR. She does not know him, but dreads him, I hear, of all mankind.

HARRIET. She concludes if he does but speak to a woman, she's undone—is on

[1] renews.

[2] await.

her knees every day to pray Heaven defend me from him.

YOUNG BELLAIR. You do not apprehend him so much as she does?

HARRIET. I never saw anything in him that was frightful.

YOUNG BELLAIR. On the contrary, have you not observed something extreme delightful in his wit and person?

HARRIET. He's agreeable and pleasant, I must own; but he does so much affect being so, he displeases me.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Lord, madam! all he does and says is so easy and so natural!

HARRIET. Some men's verses seem so to the unskillful, but labor i'the one and affectation in the other to the judicious plainly appear.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I never heard him accused of affectation before.

Enter DORIMANT *and stares* [*at*] *her*

HARRIET. [*As they walk off*] It passes on the easy town, who are pleased in him to call it humor.

[*Exit* YOUNG BELLAIR *and* HARRIET]

DORIMANT. 'Tis she! it must be she—that lovely hair, that easy shape, those wanton eyes, and all those melting charms about her mouth which Medley spoke of! I'll follow the lottery and put in for a prize with my friend Bellair. *Exit* DORIMANT *repeating*

In love the victors from the vanquished fly;
They fly that wound, and they pursue that die.

[*Re-*]*enter* YOUNG BELLAIR *and* HARRIET; *after them*, DORIMANT, *at a distance*

YOUNG BELLAIR. Most people prefer Hyde Park to this place.

HARRIET. It has the greater reputation, I confess; but I abominate the dull diversions there—the formal bows, the affected smiles, the silly by-words and amorous tweers[1] in passing. Here one meets with a little conversation now and then.

YOUNG BELLAIR. These conversations have been fatal to some of your sex, madam.

HARRIET. It may be so; because some who want temper have been undone by gaming, must others who have it wholly deny themselves the pleasure of play?

DORIMANT. (*Coming up gently and bowing to her*) Trust me, it were unreasonable, madam.

HARRIET. (*She starts and looks grave*) Lord, who's this?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Dorimant.

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] Is this the woman your father would have you marry?

YOUNG BELLAIR. It is.

DORIMANT. Her name?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Harriet.

DORIMANT. I am not mistaken; she's handsome.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Talk to her; her wit is better than her face. We were wishing for you but now.

DORIMANT. (*To* HARRIET) Overcast with seriousness o'the sudden! A thousand smiles were shining in that face but now; I never saw so quick a change of weather.

HARRIET. (*Aside*) I feel as great a change within, but he shall never know it.

DORIMANT. You were talking of play, madam. Pray, what may be your stint?

HARRIET. A little harmless discourse in public walks, or at most an appointment in a box, bare faced, at the playhouse. You are for masks and private meetings, where women engage for all they are worth, I hear.

DORIMANT. I have been used to deep play, but I can make one at small game when I like my gamester well.

HARRIET. And be so unconcerned you'll have no pleasure in't.

DORIMANT. Where there is a considerable sum to be won, the hope of drawing people in makes every trifle considerable.

HARRIET. The sordidness of men's natures, I know, makes 'em willing to flatter and comply with the rich, though they are sure never to be the better for 'em.

[1] glances, or leers.

DORIMANT. 'Tis in their power to do us good, and we despair not but at some time or other they may be willing.

HARRIET. To men who have fared in this town like you, 'twould be a great mortification to live on hope. Could you keep a Lent for a mistress?

DORIMANT. In expectation of a happy Easter and, though time be very precious, think forty days well lost to gain your favor.

HARRIET. Mr. Bellair, let us walk; 'tis time to leave him. Men grow dull when they begin to be particular.

DORIMANT. Y'are mistaken; flattery will not ensue, though I know you're greedy of the praises of the whole Mall.

HARRIET. You do me wrong.

DORIMANT. I do not. As I followed you, I observed how you were pleased when the fops cried, "She's handsome—very handsome! By God she is!" and whispered aloud your name. The thousand several forms you put your face into, then, to make yourself more agreeable! How wantonly you played with your head, flung back your locks, and looked smilingly over your shoulder at 'em!

HARRIET. I do not go begging the men's, as you do the ladies', good liking, with a sly softness in your looks and a gentle slowness in your bows as you pass 'em—as thus, sir. (*Acts him*) Is not this like you?

Enter LADY WOODVILL *and* BUSY

YOUNG BELLAIR. Your mother, madam. (*Pulls* HARRIET; *she composes herself*)

LADY WOODVILL. Ah, my dear child Harriet!

BUSY. [*Aside*] Now is she so pleased with finding her again she cannot chide her.

LADY WOODVILL. Come away!

DORIMANT. 'Tis now but high Mall, madam—the most entertaining time of the evening.

HARRIET. I would fain see that Dorimant, mother, you so cry out of for a monster; he's in the Mall, I hear.

LADY WOODVILL. Come away then! The plague is here and you should dread the infection.

YOUNG BELLAIR. You may be misinformed of the gentleman.

LADY WOODVILL. Oh, no! I hope you do not know him. He is the prince of all the devils in the town—delights in nothing but in rapes and riots!

DORIMANT.—If you did but hear him speak, madam!

LADY WOODVILL. Oh, he has a tongue they say would tempt the angels to a second fall.

Enter SIR FOPLING *with his equipage, six* Footmen *and a* Page

SIR FOPLING. Hey! Champagne, Norman, La Rose, La Fleur, La Tour, La Verdure!—Dorimant—

LADY WOODVILL. Here, here he is among this rout!—He names him! Come away, Harriet; come away!

Exeunt LADY WOODVILL, HARRIET, BUSY, *and* YOUNG BELLAIR

DORIMANT. This fool's coming has spoiled all; she's gone. But she has left a pleasing image of herself behind that wanders in my soul—it must not settle there.

SIR FOPLING. What reverie is this? Speak, man!

DORIMANT. Snatcht from myself, how far behind
Already I behold the shore!

Enter MEDLEY

MEDLEY. Dorimant, a discovery! I met with Bellair.

DORIMANT. You can tell me no news, sir; I know all.

MEDLEY. How do you like the daughter?

DORIMANT. You never came so near truth in your life as you did in her description.

MEDLEY. What think you of the mother?

DORIMANT. Whatever I think of her, she thinks very well of me, I find.

MEDLEY. Did she know you?

DORIMANT. She did not; whether she does now or no, I know not. Here was a pleasant scene toward, when in came Sir Fopling, mustering up his equipage, and at the latter end named me and frightened her away.

MEDLEY. Loveit and Bellinda are not far off; I saw 'em alight at St. James's.

DORIMANT. Sir Fopling! Hark you, a word or two. (*Whispers*) Look you do not want assurance.

SIR FOPLING. I never do on these occasions.

DORIMANT. Walk on; we must not be seen together. Make your advantage of what I have told you. The next turn you will meet the lady.

SIR FOPLING. Hey! Follow me all!

Exit SIR FOPLING *and his equipage*

DORIMANT. Medley, you shall see good sport anon between Loveit and this Fopling.

MEDLEY. I thought there was something toward, by that whisper.

DORIMANT. You know a worthy principle of hers?

MEDLEY. Not to be so much as civil to a man who speaks to her in the presence of him she professes to love.

DORIMANT. I have encouraged Fopling to talk to her to-night.

MEDLEY. Now you are here, she will go nigh to beat him.

DORIMANT. In the humor she's in, her love will make her do some very extravagant thing doubtless.

MEDLEY. What was Bellinda's business with you at my Lady Townley's?

DORIMANT. To get me to meet Loveit here in order to an *éclairissement*.[1] I made some difficulty of it and have prepared this rencounter to make good my jealousy.

MEDLEY. Here they come!

Enter MRS. LOVEIT, BELLINDA, *and* PERT

DORIMANT. I'll meet her and provoke her with a deal of dumb civility in passing by, then turn short and be behind her when Sir Fopling sets upon her—

> See how unregarded now
> That piece of beauty passes.

Exeunt DORIMANT *and* MEDLEY

BELLINDA. How wonderfully respectfully he bowed!

PERT. He's always over-mannerly when he has done a mischief.

BELLINDA. Methought, indeed, at the same time he had a strange, despising countenance.

PERT. The unlucky look, he thinks, becomes him.

BELLINDA. I was afraid you would have spoken to him, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. I would have died first. He shall no more find me the loving fool he has done.

BELLINDA. You love him still?

MRS. LOVEIT. No!

PERT. I wish you did not.

MRS. LOVEIT. I do not, and I will have you think so.—What made you hale me to this odious place, Bellinda?

BELLINDA. I hate to be hulched up in a coach; walking is much better.

MRS. LOVEIT. Would we could meet Sir Fopling now!

BELLINDA. Lord, would you not avoid him?

MRS. LOVEIT. I would make him all the advances that may be.

BELLINDA. That would confirm Dorimant's suspicion, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. He is not jealous; but I will make him so, and be revenged a way he little thinks on.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) If she should make him jealous, that may make him fond of her again. I must dissuade her from it. [*Aloud*] Lord, my dear, this will certainly make him hate you.

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Twill make him uneasy, though he does not care for me. I know the effects of jealousy on men of his proud temper.

BELLINDA. 'Tis a fantastic remedy; its operations are dangerous and uncertain.

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Tis the strongest cordial we can give to dying love. It often brings it back when there's no sign of life remaining. But I design not so much the reviving of his, as my revenge.

Enter SIR FOPLING *and his equipage*

SIR FOPLING. Hey! Bid the coachman send home four of his horses and bring the coach to Whitehall; I'll walk over the Park.

[1] explanation.

Madam, the honor of kissing your fair hand is a happiness I missed this afternoon at my Lady Townley's.

MRS. LOVEIT. You were very obliging, Sir Fopling, the last time I saw you there.

SIR FOPLING. The preference was due to your wit and beauty. [*To* BELLINDA] Madam, your servant; there never was so sweet an evening.

BELLINDA. 'T has drawn all the rabble of the town hither.

SIR FOPLING. 'Tis pity there 's not an order made that none but the *beau monde* should walk here.

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Twould add much to the beauty of the place. See what a sort[1] of nasty fellows are coming!

Enter four ill-fashioned fellows, singing:

'Tis not for kisses alone, etc.

MRS. LOVEIT. Fo! Their periwigs are scented with tobacco so strong—

SIR FOPLING. It overcomes our pulvilio[2] —methinks I smell the coffee-house they come from.

1 MAN. Dorimant's convenient, Madam Loveit.

2 MAN. I like the oily buttock with her.

3 MAN. What spruce prig is that?

1 MAN. A caravan lately come from Paris.

2 MAN. Peace! they smoke.[3]

[*They sing again*]

There's something else to be done, etc.

All of them coughing; exeunt singing

Enter DORIMANT *and* MEDLEY

DORIMANT. They're engaged.

MEDLEY. She entertains him as if she liked him!

DORIMANT. Let us go forward—seem earnest in discourse and show ourselves; then you shall see how she'll use him.

BELLINDA. Yonder's Dorimant, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. I see him. (*Aside*) He comes insulting,[4] but I will disappoint him in his expectation. (*To* SIR FOPLING) I like this pretty, nice humor of yours, Sir Fopling.—With what a loathing eye he looked upon those fellows!

SIR FOPLING. I sat near one of 'em at a play to-day and was almost poisoned with a pair of cordovan gloves he wears.

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, filthy cordovan! How I hate the smell! (*Laughs in a loud, affected way*)

SIR FOPLING. Did you observe, madam, how their cravats hung loose an inch from their necks[5] and what a frightful air it gave 'em?

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, I took particular notice of one that is always spruced up with a deal of dirty sky-colored ribband.

BELLINDA. That 's one of the walking flageolets who haunt the Mall o'nights.

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, I remember him; he's a hollow tooth enough to spoil the sweetness of an evening.

SIR FOPLING. I have seen the tallest walk the streets with a dainty pair of boxes neatly buckled on.

MRS. LOVEIT. And a little foot-boy at his heels, pocket-high, with a flat cap, a dirty face—

SIR FOPLING. And a snotty nose.

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, odious!—[*Pointing at a group*] There's many of my own sex with that Holborn equipage[6] trig[7] to Gray's Inn Walks and now and then travel hither on a Sunday.

MEDLEY. [*To* DORIMANT] She takes no notice of you.

DORIMANT. Damn her! I am jealous of a counterplot!

MRS. LOVEIT. Your liveries are the finest, Sir Fopling—Oh, that page! that page is the prettily'st drest—they are all Frenchmen?

SIR FOPLING. There's one damned English blockhead among 'em; you may know him by his mien.

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, that's he—that's he! What do you call him?

1 crowd.
2 sachet powder.
3 observe.
4 exulting.
5 Qr *neck*.
6 Attendants of a city merchant.
7 trot.

SIR FOPLING. Hey—I know not what to call him—

FOOTMAN. John Trott, madam.

SIR FOPLING. Oh, unsufferable! Trott, Trott, Trott! There's nothing so barbarous as the names of our English servants.—What countryman are you, sir?

FOOTMAN. Hampshire, sir.

SIR FOPLING. Then Hampshire be your name.—Hey, Hampshire!

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, that sound—that sound becomes the mouth of a man of quality!

MEDLEY. Dorimant, you look a little bashful on the matter.

DORIMANT. She dissembles better than I thought she could have done.

MEDLEY. You have tempted her with too luscious a bait. She bites at the coxcomb.

DORIMANT. She cannot fall from loving me, to that.

MEDLEY. You begin to be jealous in earnest.

DORIMANT.—Of one I do not love.

MEDLEY. You did love her.

DORIMANT. The fit has long been over.

MEDLEY. But I have known men fall into dangerous relapses when they found a woman inclining to another.

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] He guesses the secret of my heart. I am concerned but dare not show it, lest Bellinda should mistrust all I have done to gain her.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) I have watched his look and find no alteration there. Did he love her, some signs of jealousy would have appeared.

DORIMANT. [*Approaching*] I hope this happy evening, madam, has reconciled you to the scandalous Mall. We shall have you now hankering here again—

MRS. LOVEIT. Sir Fopling, will you walk?

SIR FOPLING. I am all obedience, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. Come along then, and let's agree to be malicious on all the ill-fashioned things we meet.

SIR FOPLING. We'll make a critique on the whole Mall, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. Bellinda, you shall engage—

BELLINDA. To the reserve of our friends, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. [*To* SIR FOPLING] No, no exceptions.

SIR FOPLING. We'll sacrifice all to our diversion?

MRS. LOVEIT. All—all.

SIR FOPLING. All.

BELLINDA. All? Then let it be.

Exeunt SIR FOPLING, MRS. LOVEIT, BELLINDA, *and* PERT, [*all*] *laughing*

MEDLEY. Would you had brought some more of your friends, Dorimant, to have been witnesses of Sir Fopling's disgrace and your triumph.

DORIMANT. 'Twere unreasonable to desire you not to laugh at me; but pray, do not expose me to the town this day or two.

MEDLEY. By that time you have hope to have regained your credit?

DORIMANT. I know she hates Fopling and only makes use of him in hope to work on me again. Had it not been for some powerful considerations which will be removed tomorrow morning, I had made her pluck off this mask and show the passion that lies panting under.

Enter a Footman

MEDLEY. Here comes a man from Bellair with news of your last adventure.

DORIMANT. I am glad he sent him; I long to know the consequence of our parting.

FOOTMAN. Sir, my master desires you to come to my Lady Townley's presently and bring Mr. Medley with you. My Lady Woodvill and her daughter are there.

MEDLEY. Then all's well, Dorimant.

FOOTMAN. They have sent for the fiddles and mean to dance. He bid me tell you, sir, the old lady does not know you, and would have you own yourself to be Mr. Courtage. They are all prepared to receive you by that name.

DORIMANT. That foppish admirer of quality, who flatters the very meat at honorable tables and never offers love to a woman below a lady-grandmother?

MEDLEY. You know the character you are to act, I see.

DORIMANT. This is Harriet's contrivance —wild, witty, lovesome, beautiful, and young!—Come along, Medley. 467

MEDLEY. This new woman would well supply the loss of Loveit.

DORIMANT. That business must not end so; before to-morrow's sun is set I will revenge and clear it. 472

And you and Loveit, to her cost, shall find,
I fathom all the depths of womankind.

Exeunt

ACT IV

SCENE I. LADY TOWNLEY'S *drawing-room*

The scene opens with the fiddles playing a country dance. Enter DORIMANT, LADY WOODVILL, YOUNG BELLAIR, *and* MRS. HARRIET, OLD BELLAIR *and* EMILIA, MR. MEDLEY *and* LADY TOWNLEY, *as having just ended the dance*

OLD BELLAIR. So, so, so—a smart bout! a very smart bout, a dod!

LADY TOWNLEY. How do you like Emilia's dancing, brother?

OLD BELLAIR. Not at all—not at all! 5

LADY TOWNLEY. You speak not what you think, I am sure.

OLD BELLAIR. No matter for that; go, bid her dance no more. It don't become her—it don't become her! Tell her I say so. (*Aside*) A dod, I love her! 11

DORIMANT. (*To* LADY WOODVILL) All people mingle nowadays, madam, and in public places women of quality have the least respect showed 'em. 15

LADY WOODVILL. I protest you say the truth, Mr. Courtage.

DORIMANT. Forms and ceremonies, the only things that uphold quality and greatness, are now shamefully laid aside and neglected. 21

LADY WOODVILL. Well, this is not the woman's age. Let 'em think what they will, lewdness is the business now; love was the business in my time. 25

DORIMANT. The women, indeed, are little beholding[1] to the young men of this age; they're generally only dull admirers of themselves, and make their court to nothing but their periwigs and cravats, and would be more concerned for the disordering of 'em—tho' on a good occasion—than a young maid would be for the tumbling of her head or handkercher. 34

LADY WOODVILL. I protest, you hit 'em.

DORIMANT. They are very assiduous to show themselves at court, well dressed, to the women of quality, but their business is with the stale mistresses of the town, who are prepared to receive their lazy addresses by industrious old lovers who have cast 'em off and make 'em easy. 42

HARRIET. [*To* MEDLEY] He fits my mother's humor so well, a little more and she'll dance a kissing dance with him anon.

MEDLEY. Dutifully observed, madam. 46

DORIMANT. [*To* LADY WOODVILL] They pretend to be great critics of beauty. By their talk you would think they liked no face, and yet they can dote on an ill one if it belong to a laundress or a tailor's daughter. They cry, "A woman's past her prime at twenty, decayed at four-and-twenty, and unsufferable at thirty." 54

LADY WOODVILL. Unsufferable at thirty! That they are in the wrong, Mr. Courtage, at five-and-thirty, there are living proofs enough to convince 'em. 58

DORIMANT. Aye, madam. There's Mrs. Setlooks, Mrs. Droplip, and my Lady Loud; show me among all our opening buds a face that promises so much beauty as the remains of theirs. 63

LADY WOODVILL. The depraved appetite of this vicious age tastes nothing but green fruit, and loathes it when 'tis kindly ripened.

DORIMANT. Else so many deserving women, madam, would not be so untimely neglected. 69

LADY WOODVILL. I protest, Mr. Courtage, a dozen such good men as you would be

[1] indebted.

enough to atone for that wicked Dorimant and all the other debauchees of the town. (HARRIET, YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, *and* LADY TOWNLEY *break out into laughter*)—What's the matter here?

MEDLEY. A pleasant mistake, madam, that a lady has made, occasions a little laughter.

OLD BELLAIR. Come, come; you keep 'em idle! They are impatient till the fiddles play again.

DORIMANT. You are not weary, madam?

LADY WOODVILL. One dance more; I cannot refuse you, Mr. Courtage. (*They dance. After the dance* OLD BELLAIR, *singing and dancing*, [*comes*] *up to* EMILIA)

EMILIA. You are very active, sir.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, sirrah! when I was a young fellow I could ha' capered up to my woman's gorget.

DORIMANT. [*To* LADY WOODVILL] You are willing to rest yourself, madam?

LADY TOWNLEY. [*To* MEDLEY] We'll walk into my chamber and sit down.

MEDLEY. Leave us Mr. Courtage; he's a dancer, and the young ladies are not weary yet.

LADY WOODVILL. We'll send him out again.

HARRIET. If you do not quickly, I know where to send for Mr. Dorimant.

LADY WOODVILL. This girl's head, Mr. Courtage, is ever running on that wild fellow.

DORIMANT. 'Tis well you have got her a good husband, madam; that will settle it.

Exeunt LADY TOWNLEY, LADY WOODVILL, *and* DORIMANT

OLD BELLAIR. (*To* EMILIA) A dod, sweetheart, be advised and do not throw thyself away on a young, idle fellow.

EMILIA. I have no such intention, sir.

OLD BELLAIR. Have a little patience; thou shalt have the man I spake of. A dod, he loves thee and will make a good husband—but no words!

EMILIA. But, sir—

OLD BELLAIR. No answer—out a pize, peace! and think on't.

Enter DORIMANT

DORIMANT. Your company is desired within, sir.

OLD BELLAIR. I go, I go! Good Mr. Courtage, fare you well!—(*To* EMILIA) Go, I'll see you no more!

EMILIA. What have I done, sir?

OLD BELLAIR. You are ugly! you are ugly!—Is she not, Mr. Courtage?

EMILIA. [*To* DORIMANT] Better words or I shan't abide you.

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize; a dod, what does she say? Hit her a pat for me there.

Exit OLD BELLAIR

MEDLEY. You have charms for the whole family.

DORIMANT. You'll spoil all with some unseasonable jest, Medley.

MEDLEY. You see I confine my tongue and am content to be a bare spectator, much contrary to my nature.

EMILIA. Methinks, Mr. Dorimant, my Lady Woodvill is a little fond of you.

DORIMANT. Would her daughter were!

MEDLEY. It may be you may find her so. Try her—you have an opportunity.

DORIMANT. And I will not lose it.—Bellair, here's a lady has something to say to you.

YOUNG BELLAIR. I wait upon her.—Mr. Medley, we have both business with you.

DORIMANT. Get you all together then. (*To* HARRIET) That demure curtsey is not amiss in jest, but do not think in earnest it becomes you.

HARRIET. Affectation is catching, I find—from your grave bow I got it.

DORIMANT. Where had you all that scorn and coldness in your look?

HARRIET. From nature, sir; pardon my want of art. I have not learnt those softnesses and languishings which now in faces are so much in fashion.

DORIMANT. You need 'em not; you have a sweetness of your own if you would but calm your frowns and let it settle.

HARRIET. My eyes are wild and wandering like my passions, and cannot yet be tied to rules of charming.

DORIMANT. Women, indeed, have commonly a method of managing those messengers of love. Now they will look as if they

would kill, and anon they will look as if they were dying. They point and rebate[1] their glances, the better to invite us.

HARRIET. I like this variety well enough, but hate the set face that always looks as if it would say, "Come, love me"—a woman who at plays makes the *doux yeux*[2] to a whole audience and at home cannot forbear 'em to her monkey.

DORIMANT. Put on a gentle smile and let me see how well it will become you.

HARRIET. I am sorry my face does not please you as it is, but I shall not be complaisant and change it.

DORIMANT. Though you are obstinate, I know 'tis capable of improvement and shall do you justice, madam, if I chance to be at Court when the critics of the circle pass their judgment; for thither you must come.

HARRIET. And expect to be taken in pieces, have all my features examined, every motion censured, and on the whole be condemned to be but pretty, or a beauty of the lowest rate. What think you?

DORIMANT. The women—nay, the very lovers who belong to the drawing-room—will maliciously allow you more than that. They always grant what is apparent, that they may the better be believed when they name concealed faults they cannot easily be disproved in.

HARRIET. Beauty runs as great a risk exposed at Court as wit does on the stage, where the ugly and foolish all are free to censure.

DORIMANT. (*Aside*) I love her and dare not let her know it; I fear she has an ascendant o'er me and may revenge the wrongs I have done her sex. [*To* HARRIET] Think of making a party, madam; love will engage.

HARRIET. You make me start! I did not think to have heard of love from you.

DORIMANT. I never knew what 'twas to have a settled ague yet, but now and then have had irregular fits.

HARRIET. Take heed! sickness after long health is commonly more violent and dangerous.

DORIMANT. (*Aside*) I have took the infection from her, and feel the disease now spreading in me. [*Aloud*] Is the name of love so frightful that you dare not stand it?

HARRIET. 'Twill do little execution out of your mouth on me, I'm sure.

DORIMANT. It has been fatal—

HARRIET. To some easy women, but we are not all born to one destiny. I was informed you use to laugh at love and not make it.

DORIMANT. The time has been, but now I must speak.

HARRIET. If it be on that idle subject, I will put on my serious look, turn my head carelessly from you, drop my lip, let my eyelids fall and hang half o'er my eyes; thus you will buzz a speech of an hour long in my ear, and I answer never a word. Why do you not begin?

DORIMANT. That the company may take notice how passionately I make advance of love, and how disdainfully you receive 'em?

HARRIET. When your love's grown strong enough to make you bear being laughed at, I'll give you leave to trouble me with it; till then pray forbear, sir.

Enter SIR FOPLING *and others in masks*

DORIMANT. What's here—masquerades?

HARRIET. I thought that foppery had been left off, and people might have been in private with a fiddle.

DORIMANT. 'Tis endeavored to be kept on foot still by some who find themselves the more acceptable the less they are known.

YOUNG BELLAIR. This must be Sir Fopling.

MEDLEY. This extraordinary habit shows it.

YOUNG BELLAIR. What are the rest?

MEDLEY. A company of French rascals whom he picked up in Paris and has brought over to be his dancing equipage on these occasions. Make him own himself; a fool is very troublesome when he presumes he is incognito.

SIR FOPLING. (*To* HARRIET) Do you know me?

[1] Fencing terms. [2] fair glances.

HARRIET. Ten to one but I guess at you.

SIR FOPLING. Are you women as fond of a vizard as we men are?

HARRIET. I am very fond of a vizard that covers a face I do not like, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Here are no masks, you see, sir, but those which came with you. This was intended a private meeting; but because you look like a gentleman, if you will discover yourself and we know you to be such, you shall be welcome.

SIR FOPLING. (*Pulling off his mask*) Dear Bellair!

MEDLEY. Sir Fopling! How came you hither?

SIR FOPLING. Faith, as I was coming late from Whitehall, after the King's *couchée*,[1] one of my people told me he had heard fiddles at my Lady Townley's, and—

DORIMANT. You need not say any more, sir.

SIR FOPLING. Dorimant, let me kiss thee.

DORIMANT. Hark you, Sir Fopling—
(*Whispers*)

SIR FOPLING. Enough, enough, Courtage.—A pretty kind of young woman that, Medley. I observed her in the Mall—more *éveillée*[2] than our English women commonly are. Prithee, what is she?

MEDLEY. The most noted coquette in town. Beware of her.

SIR FOPLING. Let her be what she will, I know how to take my measures. In Paris the mode is to flatter the prude, laugh at the *faux-prude*, make serious love to the *demi-prude*, and only rally with the *coquette*.—Medley, what think you?

MEDLEY. That for all this smattering of mathematics, you may be out in your judgment at tennis.

SIR FOPLING. What a *coq-à-l'âne* is this? I talk of women and thou answer'st tennis.

MEDLEY. Mistakes will be for want of apprehension.

SIR FOPLING. I am very glad of the acquaintance I have with this family.

MEDLEY. My lady truly is a good woman.

SIR FOPLING. Ah, Dorimant—Courtage, I would say—would thou hadst spent the last summer in Paris with me! When thou wert there, La Corneus and Sallyes were the only habitués we had: a comedian would have been a *bonne fortune*. No stranger ever passed his time so well as I did some months before I came over. I was well received in a dozen families where all the women of quality used to visit; I have intrigues to tell thee more pleasant than ever thou read'st in a novel.

HARRIET. Write 'em, sir, and oblige us women. Our language wants such little stories.

SIR FOPLING. Writing, madam, 's a mechanic part of wit. A gentleman should never go beyond a song or a billet.

HARRIET. Bussy was a gentleman.

SIR FOPLING. Who, d'Ambois?

MEDLEY. Was there ever such a brisk blockhead!

HARRIET. Not d'Ambois, sir, but Rabutin—he who writ the loves of France.

SIR FOPLING. That may be, madam; many gentlemen do things that are below 'em. Damn your authors, Courtage; women are the prettiest things we can fool away our time with.

HARRIET. I hope ye have wearied yourself to-night at Court, sir, and will not think of fooling with anybody here.

SIR FOPLING. I cannot complain of my fortune there, madam.—Dorimant—

DORIMANT. Again!

SIR FOPLING. Courtage—a pox on't!—I have something to tell thee. When I had made my court within, I came out and flung myself upon the mat under the state i'th' outward room, i'th' midst of half a dozen beauties who were withdrawn "to jeer among themselves," as they called it.

DORIMANT. Did you know 'em?

SIR FOPLING. Not one of 'em, by heavens!—not I; but they were all your friends.

DORIMANT. How are you sure of that?

SIR FOPLING. Why, we laughed at all the town—spared nobody but yourself. They found me a man for their purpose.

1 An evening reception.
2 Qt *evelie*, "sprightly."

DORIMANT. I know you are malicious, to your power.

SIR FOPLING. And faith, I had occasion to show it, for I never saw more gaping fools at a ball or on a birthday.

DORIMANT. You learned who the women were?

SIR FOPLING. No matter; they frequent the drawing-room.

DORIMANT. —And entertain themselves pleasantly at the expense of all the fops who come there.

SIR FOPLING. That 's their bus'ness. Faith, I sifted 'em, and find they have a sort of wit among them—Ah, filthy! (*Pinches a tallow candle*)

DORIMANT. Look, he has been pinching the tallow candle.

SIR FOPLING. How can you breathe in a room where there's grease frying?—Dorimant, thou art intimate with my lady; advise her for her own sake and the good company that comes hither, to burn wax lights.

HARRIET. What are these masquerades who stand so obsequiously at a distance?

SIR FOPLING. A set of balladines whom I picked out of the best in France and brought over with a *flute-douce* or two—my servants. They shall entertain you.

HARRIET. I had rather see you dance yourself, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. And I had rather do it—all the company knows it—but madam—

MEDLEY. Come, come, no excuses, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. By heavens, Medley—

MEDLEY. Like a woman I find you must be struggled with, before one brings you what you desire.

HARRIET. (*Aside*) Can he dance?

EMILIA. And fence and sing too, if you'll believe him.

DORIMANT. He has no more excellence in his heels than in his head. He went to Paris a plain, bashful English blockhead, and is returned a fine undertaking French fop.

MEDLEY. [*To the company*] I cannot prevail.

SIR FOPLING. Do not think it want of complaisance, madam.

HARRIET. You are too well bred to want that, Sir Fopling. I believe it want of power.

SIR FOPLING. By heavens, and so it is! I have sat up so damned late and drunk so cursed hard since I came to this lewd town, that I am fit for nothing but low dancing now—a *corant*, a *bourrée*, or a *menuet*. But St. Andre tells me, if I will but be regular, in one month I shall rise again. (*Endeavors at a caper*)—Pox on this debauchery!

EMILIA. I have heard your dancing much commended.

SIR FOPLING. It had the good fortune to please in Paris. I was judged to rise within an inch as high as the basque in an entry I danced there.

HARRIET. [*To* EMILIA] I am mightily taken with this fool; let us sit.—Here's a seat, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. At your feet, madam; I can be nowhere so much at ease.—By your leave, gown. [*Sits at their feet*]

HARRIET. } Ah, you'll spoil it!
EMILIA. }

SIR FOPLING. No matter; my clothes are my creatures. I make 'em to make my court to you ladies. Hey! [*He calls to his servants; they dance*] *Qu'on commence*—to an English dancer, English motions. I was forced to entertain this fellow [*Points to* JOHN TROTT], one of my set miscarrying.—Oh, horrid! Leave your damned manner of dancing and put on the French air. Have you not a pattern before you?—Pretty well—imitation in time may bring him to something.

After the dance, enter OLD BELLAIR, LADY WOODVILL, *and* LADY TOWNLEY

OLD BELLAIR. Hey, a dod, what have we here—a mumming?

LADY WOODVILL. Where's my daughter—Harriet?

DORIMANT. Here, here, madam! I know not but under these disguises there may be dangerous sparks; I gave the young lady warning.

LADY WOODVILL. Lord! I am much obliged to you, Mr. Courtage.

HARRIET. Lord, how you admire this man!

LADY WOODVILL. What have you to except against him?

HARRIET. He's a fop.

LADY WOODVILL. He's not a Dorimant—a wild extravagant fellow of the times.

HARRIET. He's a man made up of forms and commonplaces sucked out of the remaining lees of the last age.

LADY WOODVILL. He's so good a man that, were you not engaged—

LADY TOWNLEY. You'll have but little night to sleep in.

LADY WOODVILL. Lord, 'tis perfect day.

DORIMANT. (*Aside*) The hour is almost come I appointed Bellinda, and I am not so foppishly in love here to forget. I am flesh and blood yet.

LADY TOWNLEY. I am very sensible, madam. [*Bowing*]

LADY WOODVILL. Lord, madam! [*Bowing in turn*]

HARRIET. Look! in what a struggle is my poor mother yonder!

YOUNG BELLAIR. She has much ado to bring out the compliment.

DORIMANT. She strains hard for it.

HARRIET. See, see! her head tottering, her eyes staring, and her under lip trembling—

DORIMANT. Now—now she's in the very convulsions of her civility. (*Aside*) 'Sdeath, I shall lose Bellinda! I must fright her hence; she'll be an hour in this fit of good manners else. (*To* LADY WOODVILL) Do you not know Sir Fopling, madam?

LADY WOODVILL. I have seen that face—Oh, heavens! 'tis the same we met in the Mall! How came he here?

DORIMANT. A fiddle, in this town, is a kind of fop-call; no sooner it strikes up but the house is besieged with an army of masquerades straight.

LADY WOODVILL. Lord, I tremble, Mr. Courtage! For certain, Dorimant is in the company.

DORIMANT. I cannot confidently say he is not. You had best be gone. I will wait upon you; your daughter is in the hands of Mr. Bellair.

LADY WOODVILL. I'll see her before me.—Harriet, come away.

YOUNG BELLAIR. [*Calls*] Lights! lights! [*Goes out with* LADY WOODVILL *and* HARRIET]

LADY TOWNLEY. Light, down there!

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, it needs not—

DORIMANT. [*To the* Servant *entering*] Call my Lady Woodvill's coach to the door quickly. [*Exit* DORIMANT]

OLD BELLAIR. Stay, Mr. Medley. Let the young fellows do that duty; we will drink a glass of wine together. 'Tis good after dancing.—What mumming spark is that? [*Points at* SIR FOPLING]

MEDLEY. He is not to be comprehended in few words.

SIR FOPLING. Hey, La Tour!

MEDLEY. Whither away, Sir Fopling?

SIR FOPLING. I have bus'ness with Courtage.

MEDLEY. He'll but put the ladies into their coach and come up again.

OLD BELLAIR. In the meantime I'll call for a bottle. *Exit* OLD BELLAIR

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR

MEDLEY. Where's Dorimant?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Stol'n home. He has had business waiting him there all this night, I believe, by an impatience I observed in him.

MEDLEY. Very likely; 'tis but dissembling drunkenness, railing at his friends, and then the kind soul will embrace the blessing and forget the tedious expectation.

SIR FOPLING. I must speak with him before I sleep.

YOUNG BELLAIR. [*To* MEDLEY] Emilia and I are resolved on that business.

MEDLEY. —Peace, here's your father.

Enter OLD BELLAIR *and a* Butler *with a bottle of wine*

OLD BELLAIR. The women are all gone to bed.—Fill, boy; Mr. Medley, begin a health.

MEDLEY. (*Whispers*) To Emilia!

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize! she's a rogue and I'll not pledge you.

MEDLEY. I know you well.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, drink it then!

SIR FOPLING. Let us have the new bacchic.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, that is a hard word. What does it mean, sir?

MEDLEY. A catch—or drinking song.

OLD BELLAIR. Let us have it then.

SIR FOPLING. Fill the glasses round and draw up in a body. [*To the* Musicians]—Hey, music! [*All take seats and sing*]

The pleasures of love and the joys of good wine
To perfect our happiness, wisely we join.
We to beauty all day
Give the sovereign sway
And her favorite nymphs devoutly obey.
At the plays we are constantly making our court,
And when they are ended we follow the sport
To the Mall and the Park,
Where we love till 'tis dark.
Then sparkling champagne
Puts an end to their reign;
It quickly recovers
Poor languishing lovers;
Makes us frolic and gay, and drowns all our sorrow.
But alas! we relapse again on the morrow.
Let every man stand
With his glass in his hand,
And briskly discharge at the word of command:
Here's a health to all those
Whom to-night we depose!
Wine and beauty by turns great souls should inspire;
Present all together—and now, boys, give fire!
[*They drink*]

OLD BELLAIR. A dod! a pretty business and very merry.

SIR FOPLING. Hark you; Medley, let's you and I take the fiddles and go waken Dorimant.

MEDLEY. We shall do him a courtesy, if it be as I guess. For after the fatigue of this night he'll quickly have his belly full and be glad of an occasion to cry, "Take away, Handy!"

YOUNG BELLAIR. I'll go with you, and there we'll consult about affairs, Medley.

OLD BELLAIR. (*Looks on his watch*) A dod, 'tis six o'clock!

SIR FOPLING. Let's away then.

OLD BELLAIR. Mr. Medley, my sister tells me you are an honest man—and a dod, I love you. Few words and hearty—that 's the way with old Harry, old Harry.

SIR FOPLING. [*To his* Servants] Light your flambeaux. Hey!

OLD BELLAIR. What does the man mean?

MEDLEY. 'Tis day, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. No matter; our serenade will look the greater. *Exeunt Omnes*

SCENE II. DORIMANT'S *lodging. A table, a candle, toilet articles, etc.*; HANDY, *tying up linen*

Enter DORIMANT *in his gown, and* BELLINDA

DORIMANT. Why will you be gone so soon?

BELLINDA. Why did you stay out so late?

DORIMANT. Call a chair, Handy.—What makes you tremble so?

BELLINDA. I have a thousand fears about me. Have I not been seen, think you?

DORIMANT. By nobody but myself and trusty Handy.

BELLINDA. Where are all your people?

DORIMANT. I have dispersed 'em all on sleeveless errands.—What does that sigh mean?

BELLINDA. Can you be so unkind to ask me? (*Sighs*) Well—were it to do again—

DORIMANT. We should do it, should we not?

BELLINDA. I think we should—the wickeder man you to make me love you so well.—Will you be discreet now?

DORIMANT. I will.

BELLINDA. You cannot.

DORIMANT. Never doubt it.

BELLINDA. I never will expect it.

DORIMANT. You do me wrong.

BELLINDA. You have no more power to keep a secret than I had not to trust you with it.

DORIMANT. By all the joys I have had and those I keep in store—

BELLINDA. —You'll do for my sake, what you never did before.

DORIMANT. By that truth thou hast spoken, a wife shall sooner betray herself to her husband.

BELLINDA. Yet I had rather you should be false in this than in another thing you promised me.

DORIMANT. What's that?

BELLINDA. That you would never see Loveit more but in public places—in the Park, at Court, and plays.

DORIMANT. 'Tis not likely a man should be fond of seeing a damned old play when there is a new one acted.

BELLINDA. I dare not trust your promise.

DORIMANT. You may—

BELLINDA. This does not satisfy me. You shall swear you never will see her more.

DORIMANT. I will, a thousand oaths. By all—

BELLINDA. Hold! You shall not, now I think on't better.

DORIMANT. I will swear!

BELLINDA. I shall grow jealous of the oath and think I owe your truth to that, not to your love.

DORIMANT. Then, by my love; no other oath I'll swear.

Enter HANDY

HANDY. Here's a chair.

BELLINDA. Let me go.

DORIMANT. I cannot.

BELLINDA. Too willingly, I fear.

DORIMANT. Too unkindly feared. When will you promise me again?

BELLINDA. Not this fortnight.

DORIMANT. You will be better than your word.

BELLINDA. I think I shall. Will it make you love me less? (*Starting; fiddles without*)—Hark, what fiddles are these?

DORIMANT. Look out, Handy.

[HANDY *goes out and returns*]

HANDY. Mr. Medley, Mr. Bellair, and Sir Fopling; they are coming up.

DORIMANT. How got they in?

HANDY. The door was open for the chair.

BELLINDA. Lord, let me fly!

DORIMANT. Here! here down the back stairs! I'll see you into your chair.

BELLINDA. No, no! Stay and receive 'em. —And be sure you keep your word and never see Loveit more. Let it be a proof of your kindness.

DORIMANT. It shall.—Handy, direct her. (*Kissing her hand*) Everlasting love go along with thee. [*Exeunt* BELLINDA *and* HANDY]

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, *and* SIR FOPLING

YOUNG BELLAIR. Not abed yet?

MEDLEY. You have had an irregular fit, Dorimant.

DORIMANT. I have.

YOUNG BELLAIR. And is it off already?

DORIMANT. Nature has done her part, gentlemen; when she falls kindly to work, great cures are effected in little time, you know.

SIR FOPLING. We thought there was a wench in the case, by the chair that waited. Prithee, make us a *confidence.*

DORIMANT. Excuse me.

SIR FOPLING. *Le sage* Dorimant!—Was she pretty?

DORIMANT. So pretty she may come to keep her coach and pay parish duties if the good humor of the age continue.

MEDLEY. And be of the number of the ladies kept by public-spirited men for the good of the whole town.

SIR FOPLING. (*Dancing by himself*) Well said, Medley.

YOUNG BELLAIR. See Sir Fopling dancing!

DORIMANT. You are practicing and have a mind to recover, I see.

SIR FOPLING. Prithee, Dorimant, why hast thou not a glass hung up here? A room is the dullest thing without one.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Here is company to entertain you.

SIR FOPLING. But I mean in case of being alone. In a glass a man may entertain himself.

DORIMANT. The shadow of himself, indeed.

SIR FOPLING. —Correct the errors of his motions and his dress.

MEDLEY. I find, Sir Fopling, in your solitude you remember the saying of the wise man, and study yourself.

SIR FOPLING. 'Tis the best diversion in our retirements. Dorimant, thou art a pretty fellow and wear'st thy clothes well, but I never saw thee have a handsome cravat. Were they made up like mine, they'd give another air to thy face. Prithee, let me send my man to dress thee but one a day; by heavens, an Englishman cannot tie a ribbon.

DORIMANT. They are something clumsily fisted.

SIR FOPLING. I have brought over the prettiest fellow that ever spread a toilet. He served some time under Merille, the greatest *genie* in the world for a *valet-de-chambre.*

DORIMANT. What! he who formerly belonged to the Duke of Candale?

SIR FOPLING. The same, and got him his immortal reputation.

DORIMANT. You've a very fine brandenburg on, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. It serves to wrap me up after the fatigue of a ball.

MEDLEY. I see you often in it, with your periwig tied up.

SIR FOPLING. We should not always be in a set dress; 'tis more *en cavalier*[1] to appear now and then in a *deshabillé.*

MEDLEY. Pray, how goes your business with Loveit?

SIR FOPLING. You might have answered yourself in the Mall last night. Dorimant, did you not see the advances she made me? I have been endeavoring at a song.

DORIMANT. Already!

SIR FOPLING. 'Tis my *coup d'essai*[2] in English—I would fain have thy opinion of it.

DORIMANT. Let's see it.

SIR FOPLING. Hey, page, give me my song.—Bellair, here; thou hast a pretty voice—sing it.

YOUNG BELLAIR. Sing it yourself, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. Excuse me.

YOUNG BELLAIR. You learnt to sing in Paris.

SIR FOPLING. I did—of Lambert, the greatest master in the world. But I have my own fault, a weak voice, and care not to sing out of a *ruelle.*

DORIMANT. A *ruelle* is a pretty cage for a singing fop, indeed.

YOUNG BELLAIR. (*Reads the song*)

> How charming Phyllis is, how fair!
> Ah, that she were as willing
> To ease my wounded heart of care,
> And make her eyes less killing.
> I sigh, I sigh, I languish now,
> And love will not let me rest;
> I drive about the Park and bow,
> Still as I meet my dearest.

SIR FOPLING. Sing it! sing it, man; it goes to a pretty new tune which I am confident was made by Baptiste.

MEDLEY. Sing it yourself, Sir Fopling; he does not know the tune.

SIR FOPLING. I'll venture. [*He sings*]

DORIMANT. Aye, marry! now 'tis something. I shall not flatter you, Sir Fopling; there is not much thought in't, but 'tis passionate and well turned.

MEDLEY. After the French way.

SIR FOPLING. That I aimed at. Does it not give you a lively image of the thing? Slap down goes the glass, and thus we are at it.

DORIMANT. It does, indeed, I perceive, Sir Fopling. You'll be the very head of the sparks who are lucky in compositions of this nature.

Enter SIR FOPLING'S Footman

SIR FOPLING. La Tour, is the bath ready?

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

SIR FOPLING. *Adieu donc, mes chers.*

Exit SIR FOPLING

MEDLEY. When have you your revenge on Loveit, Dorimant?

DORIMANT. I will but change my linen and about it.

MEDLEY. The powerful considerations which hindered, have been removed then?

DORIMANT. Most luckily this morning. You must along with me; my reputation lies at stake there.

[1] cavalierly. [2] experimental piece.

MEDLEY. I am engaged to Bellair.

DORIMANT. What's your business?

MEDLEY. Ma-tri-mony, an't like you.

DORIMANT. It does not, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR. It may in time, Dorimant. What think you of Mrs. Harriet?

DORIMANT. What does she think of me?

YOUNG BELLAIR. I am confident she loves you.

DORIMANT. How does it appear?

YOUNG BELLAIR. Why, she's never well but when she's talking of you—but then, she finds all the faults in you she can. She laughs at all who commend you—but then, she speaks ill of all who do not.

DORIMANT. Women of her temper betray themselves by their over-cunning. I had once a growing quarrel with a lady who would always quarrel with me when I came to see her, and yet was never quiet if I stayed a day from her.

YOUNG BELLAIR. My father is in love with Emilia.

DORIMANT. That is a good warrant for your proceedings. Go on and prosper; I must to Loveit. Medley, I am sorry you cannot be a witness.

MEDLEY. Make her meet Sir Fopling again in the same place and use him ill before me.

DORIMANT. That may be brought about, I think. I'll be at your aunt's anon and give you joy, Mr. Bellair.

YOUNG BELLAIR. You had not best think of Mrs. Harriet too much; without church security there's no taking up there.

DORIMANT. I may fall into the snare too. But—

The wife will find a difference in our fate;
You wed a woman, I a good estate. *Exeunt*

SCENE III. [*The street before* MRS. LOVEIT'S *house*]

Enter the Chairmen [*bearing*] BELLINDA; *the men set down* [*the chair*] *and open it.* BELLINDA *starting*

BELLINDA. (*Surprised*) Lord, where am I?—in the Mall? Whither have you brought me?

1 CHAIRMAN. You gave us no directions, madam.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) The fright I was in made me forget it.

1 CHAIRMAN. We use to carry a lady from the Squire's hither.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) This is Loveit's: I am undone if she sees me.—Quickly, carry me away!

1 CHAIRMAN. Whither, an't like your honor?

BELLINDA. Ask no questions—

Enter LOVEIT'S Footman

FOOTMAN. Have you seen my lady, madam?

BELLINDA. I am just come to wait upon her.

FOOTMAN. She will be glad to see you, madam. She sent me to you this morning to desire your company, and I was told you went out by five o'clock.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) More and more unlucky!

FOOTMAN. Will you walk in, madam?

BELLINDA. I'll discharge my chair and follow. Tell your mistress I am here. (*Exit* Footman) Take this (*Gives the* Chairmen *money*), and if ever you should be examined, say you took me up in the Strand over against the Exchange, as you will answer it to Mr. Dorimant.

CHAIRMEN. We will, an't like your honor.

Exeunt Chairmen

BELLINDA. Now to come off, I must on—

In confidence and lies some hope is left;
'Twere hard to be found out in the first theft.

[*Exit* BELLINDA]

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter MRS. LOVEIT *and* PERT, *her woman*

PERT. Well, in my eyes Sir Fopling is no such despicable person.

MRS. LOVEIT. You are an excellent judge.

PERT. He's as handsome a man as Mr. Dorimant, and as great a gallant.

MRS. LOVEIT. Intolerable! Is't not enough I submit to his impertinences but must I be plagued with yours too?

PERT. Indeed, madam—

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Tis false, mercenary malice—

Enter her Footman

FOOTMAN. Mrs. Bellinda, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. What of her?

FOOTMAN. She's below.

MRS. LOVEIT. How came she?

FOOTMAN. In a chair; Ambling Harry brought her.

MRS. LOVEIT. [*Aside*] He bring her? His chair stands near Dorimant's door and always brings me from thence.—Run and ask him where he took her up. Go! There is no truth in friendship neither. Women, as well as men,—all are false—or all are so to me, at least.

PERT. You are jealous of her too?

MRS. LOVEIT. You had best tell her I am. 'Twill become the liberty you take of late. [*Aside*] This fellow's bringing of her, her going out by five o'clock—I know not what to think.

Enter BELLINDA

—Bellinda, you are grown an early riser, I hear.

BELLINDA. Do you not wonder, my dear, what made me abroad so soon?

MRS. LOVEIT. You do not use to be so.

BELLINDA. The country gentlewomen I told you of (Lord, they have the oddest diversions!) would never let me rest till I promised to go with them to the markets this morning to eat fruit and buy nosegays.

MRS. LOVEIT. Are they so fond of a filthy nosegay?

BELLINDA. They complain of the stinks of the town, and are never well but when they have their noses in one.

MRS. LOVEIT. There are essences and sweet waters.

BELLINDA. Oh, they cry out upon perfumes, they are unwholesome; one of 'em was falling into a fit with the smell of these *narolii*.

MRS. LOVEIT. Methinks in compliance you should have had a nosegay too.

BELLINDA. Do you think, my dear, I could be so loathsome, to trick myself up with carnations and stock gillyflowers? I begged their pardon and told them I never wore anything but orange flowers and tuberose. That which made me willing to go, was a strange desire I had to eat some fresh nectarines.

MRS. LOVEIT. And had you any?

BELLINDA. The best I ever tasted.

MRS. LOVEIT. Whence came you now?

BELLINDA. From their lodgings, where I crowded out of a coach and took a chair to come and see you, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. Whither did you send for that chair?

BELLINDA. 'Twas going by empty.

MRS. LOVEIT. Where do these countrywomen lodge, I pray?

BELLINDA. In the Strand over against the Exchange.

PERT. The place is never without a nest of 'em. They are always, as one goes by, fleering in balconies or staring out of windows.

Enter Footman

MRS. LOVEIT. (*To the* Footman) Come hither! [*She whispers to him*]

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) This fellow by her order has been questioning the chairmen. I threatened 'em with the name of Dorimant; if they should have told truth, I am lost forever.

MRS. LOVEIT. —In the Strand, said you?

FOOTMAN. Yes, madam; over against the Exchange. *Exit* Footman

MRS. LOVEIT. [*Aside*] She's innocent, and I am much to blame.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) I am so frightened my countenance will betray me.

MRS. LOVEIT. Bellinda, what makes you look so pale?

BELLINDA. Want of my usual rest and jolting up and down so long in an odious hackney.

Footman *returns*

FOOTMAN. Madam, Mr. Dorimant.

MRS. LOVEIT. What makes him here?

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) Then I am betrayed, indeed. He's broken his word and I love a man that does not care for me!

MRS. LOVEIT. Lord, you faint, Bellinda!

BELLINDA. I think I shall—such an oppression here on the sudden.

PERT. She has eaten too much fruit I warrant you.

MRS. LOVEIT. Not unlikely.

PERT. 'Tis that lies heavily on her stomach.

MRS. LOVEIT. Have her into my chamber, give her some surfeit water, and let her lie down a little.

PERT. Come, madam, I was a strange devourer of fruit when I was young—so ravenous—

Exeunt BELLINDA *and* PERT *leading her off*

MRS. LOVEIT. Oh, that my love would be but calm awhile, that I might receive this man with all the scorn and indignation he deserves!

Enter DORIMANT

DORIMANT. Now for a touch of Sir Fopling to begin with.—Hey, page, give positive order that none of these people stir. Let the *canaille* wait as they should do. Since noise and nonsense have such powerful charms,

I, that I may successful prove,
Transform myself to what you love.

MRS. LOVEIT. If that would do, you need not change from what you are. You can be vain and loud enough.

DORIMANT. But not with so good a grace as Sir Fopling.—"Hey, Hampshire!"—Oh, that sound, that sound becomes a man of quality!

MRS. LOVEIT. Is there a thing so hateful as a senseless mimic?

DORIMANT. He's a great grievance to all who, like yourself, madam, love to play the fool in quiet.

MRS. LOVEIT. A ridiculous animal, who has more of the ape than the ape has of the man in him!

DORIMANT. I have as mean an opinion of a sheer mimic as yourself; yet were he all ape, I should prefer him to the gay, the giddy, brisk, insipid, noisy fool you dote on.

MRS. LOVEIT. Those noisy fools, however you despise 'em, have good qualities which weigh more (or ought at least) with us women than all the pernicious wit you have to boast of.

DORIMANT. That I may hereafter have a just value for their merit, pray, do me the favor to name 'em.

MRS. LOVEIT. You'll despise 'em as the dull effects of ignorance and vanity; yet I care not if I mention some. First, they really admire us, while you at best but flatter us well.

DORIMANT. Take heed! Fools can dissemble too.

MRS. LOVEIT. They may, but not so artificially as you. There is no fear they should deceive us.—Then, they are assiduous, sir; they are ever offering us their service, and always waiting on our will.

DORIMANT. You owe that to their excessive idleness. They know not how to entertain themselves at home, and find so little welcome abroad they are fain to fly to you who countenance 'em, as a refuge against solitude they would be otherwise condemned to.

MRS. LOVEIT. Their conversation, too, diverts us better.

DORIMANT. Playing with your fan, smelling to your gloves, commending your hair, and taking notice how 'tis cut and shaded after the new way—

MRS. LOVEIT. Were it sillier than you can make it, you must allow 'tis pleasanter to laugh at others than to be laughed at ourselves, though never so wittily. Then, though they want skill to flatter us, they flatter themselves so well they save us the labor. We need not take that care and pains to satisfy 'em of our love, which we so often lose on you.

DORIMANT. They commonly, indeed, believe too well of themselves, and always better of you than you deserve. 192

MRS. LOVEIT. You are in the right. They have an implicit faith in us which keeps 'em from prying narrowly into our secrets and saves us from the vexatious trouble of clearing doubts which your subtle and causeless jealousies every moment raise. 198

DORIMANT. There is an inbred falsehood in women, which inclines 'em still to them whom they may most easily deceive.

MRS. LOVEIT. The man who loves above his quality does not suffer more from the insolent impertinence of his mistress than the woman who loves above her understanding does from the arrogant presumptions of her friend. 207

DORIMANT. You mistake the use of fools; they are designed for properties, and not for friends. You have an indifferent stock of reputation left yet. Lose it all like a frank gamester on the square; 'twill then be time enough to turn rook[1] and cheat it up again on a good, substantial bubble. 214

MRS. LOVEIT. The old and the ill-favored are only fit for properties, indeed, but young and handsome fools have met with kinder fortunes. 218

DORIMANT. They have—to the shame of your sex be it spoken! 'Twas this, the thought of this, made me by a timely jealousy endeavor to prevent the good fortune you are providing for Sir Fopling. But against a woman's frailty all our care is vain.

MRS. LOVEIT. Had I not with a dear experience bought the knowledge of your falsehood, you might have fooled me yet. This is not the first jealousy you have feigned, to make a quarrel with me and get a week to throw away on some such unknown, inconsiderable slut as you have been lately lurking with at plays. 232

DORIMANT. Women, when they would break off with a man, never want th' address to turn the fault on him. 235

MRS. LOVEIT. You take a pride of late in using me ill, that the town may know the power you have over me, which now (as unreasonably as yourself) expects that I (do me all the injuries you can) must love you still. 241

DORIMANT. I am so far from expecting that you should, I begin to think you never did love me.

MRS. LOVEIT. Would the memory of it were so wholly worn out in me, that I did doubt it too! What made you come to disturb my growing quiet?

DORIMANT. To give you joy of your growing infamy. 250

MRS. LOVEIT. Insupportable! Insulting devil—this from you, the only author of my shame! This from another had been but justice; but from you, 'tis a hellish and inhuman outrage. What have I done? 255

DORIMANT. A thing that puts you below my scorn, and makes my anger as ridiculous as you have made my love.

MRS. LOVEIT. I walked last night with Sir Fopling. 260

DORIMANT. You did, madam; and you talked and laughed aloud, "Ha, ha, ha!"—Oh, that laugh! that laugh becomes the confidence of a woman of quality. 264

MRS. LOVEIT. You who have more pleasure in the ruin of a woman's reputation than in the endearments of her love, reproach me not with yourself—and I defy you to name the man who can lay a blemish on my fame.

DORIMANT. To be seen publicly so transported with the vain follies of that notorious fop, to me is an infamy below the sin of prostitution with another man. 273

MRS. LOVEIT. Rail on! I am satisfied in the justice of what I did; you had provoked me to't.

DORIMANT. What I did was the effect of passion, whose extravagancies you have been willing to forgive. 279

MRS. LOVEIT. And what I did was the effect of a passion you may forgive if you think fit.

DORIMANT. Are you so indifferent grown?

MRS. LOVEIT. I am. 284

DORIMANT. Nay, then 'tis time to part. I'll send you back your letters you have so

[1] swindler.

often asked for.—I have two or three of 'em about me.

MRS. LOVEIT. Give 'em me.

DORIMANT. You snatch as if you thought I would not. There! [*Gives her the letters*] and may the perjuries in 'em be mine if e'er I see you more! [*He offers to go; she catches him*]

MRS. LOVEIT. Stay!

DORIMANT. I will not.

MRS. LOVEIT. You shall.

DORIMANT. What have you to say?

MRS. LOVEIT. I cannot speak it yet.

DORIMANT. Something more in commendation of the fool?—Death, I want patience; let me go!

MRS. LOVEIT. I cannot. (*Aside*) I can sooner part with the limbs that hold him. [*Aloud*] I hate that nauseous fool; you know I do.

DORIMANT. Was it the scandal you were fond of then?

MRS. LOVEIT. You'd raised my anger equal to my love—a thing you ne'er could do before, and in revenge I did—I know not what I did. Would you would not think on't more!

DORIMANT. Should I be willing to forget it, I shall be daily reminded of it; 'twill be a commonplace for all the town to laugh at me, and Medley, when he is rhetorically drunk, will ever be declaiming on it in my ears.

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Twill be believed a jealous spite. Come, forget it.

DORIMANT. Let me consult my reputation; you are too careless of it. (*Pauses*) You shall meet Sir Fopling in the Mall again to-night.

MRS. LOVEIT. [*Releasing him*] What mean you?

DORIMANT. I have thought on it, and you must. 'Tis necessary to justify my love to the world. You can handle a coxcomb as he deserves when you are not out of humor, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. Public satisfaction for the wrong I have done you? This is some new device to make me more ridiculous.

DORIMANT. Hear me!

MRS. LOVEIT. I will not.

DORIMANT. You will be persuaded.

MRS. LOVEIT. Never!

DORIMANT. Are you so obstinate?

MRS. LOVEIT. Are you so base?

DORIMANT. You will not satisfy my love?

MRS. LOVEIT. I would die to satisfy that; but I will not, to save you from a thousand racks, do a shameless thing to please your vanity.

DORIMANT. Farewell, false woman!

MRS. LOVEIT. Do—go!

DORIMANT. You will call me back again.

MRS. LOVEIT. Exquisite fiend, I knew you came but to torment me!

Enter BELLINDA *and* PERT

DORIMANT. (*Surprised*) Bellinda here!

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) He starts and looks pale! The sight of me has touched his guilty soul.

PERT. 'Twas but a qualm, as I said—a little indigestion; the surfeit water did it, madam, mixed with a little *mirabilis*.

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] I am confounded, and cannot guess how she came hither!

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Tis your fortune, Bellinda, ever to be here when I am abused by this prodigy of ill-nature.

BELLINDA. I am amazed to find him here. How has he the face to come near you?

DORIMANT. (*Aside*) Here is fine work towards! I never was at such a loss before.

BELLINDA. One who makes a public profession of breach of faith and gratitude—I loathe the sight of him.

DORIMANT. [*Aside*] There is no remedy; I must submit to their tongues now, and some other time bring myself off as well as I can.

BELLINDA. Other men are wicked; but then, they have some sense of shame. He is never well but when he triumphs—nay, glories to a woman's face in his villainies.

MRS. LOVEIT. You are in the right, Bellinda, but methinks your kindness for me makes you concern yourself too much with him.

BELLINDA. It does indeed, my dear. His barbarous carriage to you yesterday made me hope you ne'er would see him more, and the very next day to find him here again, provokes me strangely. But because I know you love him, I have done.

DORIMANT. You have reproached me handsomely, and I deserve it for coming hither; but—

PERT. You must expect it, sir. All ladies will hate you for my lady's sake.

DORIMANT. (*Aside to* BELLINDA) Nay, if she begins too, 'tis time to fly; I shall be scolded to death else. [*Aloud*] I am to blame in some circumstances, I confess; but as to the main, I am not so guilty as you imagine. I shall seek a more convenient time to clear myself.

MRS. LOVEIT. Do it now. What impediments are here?

DORIMANT. I want time, and you want temper.

MRS. LOVEIT. These are weak pretenses.

DORIMANT. You were never more mistaken in your life; and so farewell.

(DORIMANT *flings off*)

MRS. LOVEIT. Call a footman, Pert, quickly; I will have him dogged.

PERT. I wish you would not, for my quiet and your own. [*Exit* PERT]

MRS. LOVEIT. I'll find out the infamous cause of all our quarrels, pluck her mask off, and expose her bare-faced to the world!

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) Let me but escape this time, I'll never venture more.

MRS. LOVEIT. Bellinda, you shall go with me.

BELLINDA. I have such a heaviness hangs on me with what I did this morning, I would fain go home and sleep, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. Death and eternal darkness! I shall never sleep again. Raging fevers seize the world and make mankind as restless as I am! *Exit* MRS. LOVEIT

BELLINDA. I knew him false and helped to make him so. Was not her ruin enough to fright me from the danger? It should have been, but love can take no warning.

Exit BELLINDA

SCENE II. LADY TOWNLEY'S *house*

Enter MEDLEY, YOUNG BELLAIR, LADY TOWNLEY, [EMILIA], *and* [SMIRK], *a* Chaplain

MEDLEY. Bear up, Bellair, and do not let us see that repentance in thine we daily do in married faces.

LADY TOWNLEY. This marriage will strangely surprise my brother when he knows it.

MEDLEY. Your nephew ought to conceal it for a time, madam, since marriage has lost its good name. Prudent men seldom expose their own reputations till 'tis convenient to justify their wives.

OLD BELLAIR. (*Without*) Where are you all there? Out! a dod, will nobody hear?

LADY TOWNLEY. My brother! Quickly, Mr. Smirk, into this closet; you must not be seen yet! [SMIRK *goes into the closet*]

Enter OLD BELLAIR *and* LADY TOWNLEY'S Page

OLD BELLAIR. Desire Mr. Forbes to walk into the lower parlor; I will be with him presently. (*To* YOUNG BELLAIR) Where have you been, sir, you could not wait on me to-day?

YOUNG BELLAIR. About a business.

OLD BELLAIR. Are you so good at business? A dod, I have a business too, you shall dispatch out of hand, sir.—Send for a parson, sister; my Lady Woodvill and her daughter are coming.

LADY TOWNLEY. What need you huddle up things thus?

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize! youth is apt to play the fool, and 'tis not good it should be in their power.

LADY TOWNLEY. You need not fear your son.

OLD BELLAIR. He has been idling this morning, and a dod, I do not like him. (*To* EMILIA) How dost thou do, sweetheart?

EMILIA. You are very severe, sir—married in such haste.

OLD BELLAIR. Go to, thou'rt a rogue, and I will talk with thee anon. Here my Lady Woodvill comes.

Enter LADY WOODVILL, HARRIET, *and* BUSY

—Welcome, madam; Mr. Forbes's below with the writings.

LADY WOODVILL. Let us down and make an end then.

OLD BELLAIR. Sister, show us the way. (*To* YOUNG BELLAIR, *who is talking to* HARRIET) Harry, your business lies not there yet. Excuse him till we have done, lady, and then, a dod, he shall be for thee. Mr. Medley, we must trouble you to be a witness.

MEDLEY. I luckily came for that purpose, sir.

Exeunt OLD BELLAIR, YOUNG BELLAIR, LADY TOWNLEY, *and* LADY WOODVILL

BUSY. What will you do, madam?

HARRIET. Be carried back and mewed up in the country again—run away here—anything rather than be married to a man I do not care for! Dear Emilia, do thou advise me.

EMILIA. Mr. Bellair is engaged, you know.

HARRIET. I do, but know not what the fear of losing an estate may fright him to.

EMILIA. In the desperate condition you are in, you should consult with some judicious man. What think you of Mr. Dorimant?

HARRIET. I do not think of him at all.

BUSY. [*Aside*] She thinks of nothing else, I am sure.

EMILIA. How fond your mother was of Mr. Courtage!

HARRIET. Because I contrived the mistake to make a little mirth, you believe I like the man.

EMILIA. Mr. Bellair believes you love him.

HARRIET. Men are seldom in the right when they guess at a woman's mind. Would she whom he loves, loved him no better!

BUSY. (*Aside*) That's e'en well enough, on all conscience.

EMILIA. Mr. Dorimant has a great deal of wit.

HARRIET. And takes a great deal of pains to show it.

EMILIA. He's extremely well fashioned.

HARRIET. Affectedly grave, or ridiculously wild and apish.

BUSY. You defend him still against your mother!

HARRIET. I would not were he justly rallied, but I cannot hear anyone undeservedly railed at.

EMILIA. Has your woman learned the song you were so taken with?

HARRIET. I was fond of a new thing; 'tis dull at a second hearing.

EMILIA. Mr. Dorimant made it.

BUSY. She knows it, madam, and has made me sing it at least a dozen times this morning.

HARRIET. Thy tongue is as impertinent as thy fingers.

EMILIA. You have provoked her.

BUSY. 'Tis but singing the song and I shall appease her.

EMILIA. Prithee, do.

HARRIET. She has a voice will grate your ears worse than a cat-call, and dresses so ill she's scarce fit to trick up a yeoman's daughter on a holiday. (BUSY *sings*)

SONG

BY SIR CAR SCROOPE

As Amoret with Phyllis sat,
One evening on the plain,
And saw the charming Strephon wait
To tell the nymph his pain;

The threat'ning danger to remove,
She whispered in her ear,
"Ah, Phyllis, if you would not love,
This shepherd do not hear!

"None ever had so strange an art,
His passion to convey
Into a list'ning virgin's heart,
And steal her soul away.

"Fly, fly betimes, for fear you give
Occasion for your fate."
"In vain," said she; "in vain I strive!
Alas, 'tis now too late."

Enter DORIMANT

DORIMANT. Music so softens and disarms the mind—

HARRIET. That not one arrow does resistance find.

DORIMANT. Let us make use of the lucky minute, then.

HARRIET. (*Aside, turning from* DORIMANT) My love springs with my blood into my face; I dare not look upon him yet.

DORIMANT. What have we here? the picture of celebrated beauty giving audience in public to a declared lover?

HARRIET. Play the dying fop and make the piece complete, sir.

DORIMANT. What think you if the hint were well improved—the whole mystery of making love pleasantly designed and wrought in a suit of hangings?

HARRIET. 'Twere needless to execute fools in effigy who suffer daily in their own persons.

DORIMANT. (*Aside to* EMILIA) Mrs. Bride, for such I know this happy day has made you—

EMILIA. (*Aside*) Defer the formal joy you are to give me, and mind your business with her. (*Aloud*) Here are dreadful preparations, Mr. Dorimant—writings sealing, and a parson sent for.

DORIMANT. To marry this lady?

BUSY. Condemned she is, and what will become of her I know not, without you generously engage in a rescue.

DORIMANT. In this sad condition, madam, I can do no less than offer you my service.

HARRIET. The obligation is not great; you are the common sanctuary for all young women who run from their relations.

DORIMANT. I have always my arms open to receive the distressed, but I will open my heart and receive you where none yet did ever enter. You have filled it with a secret; might I but let you know it—

HARRIET. Do not speak it if you would have me believe it. Your tongue is so famed for falsehood, 'twill do the truth an injury. (*Turns away her head*)

DORIMANT. Turn not away, then, but look on me and guess it.

HARRIET. Did you not tell me there was no credit to be given to faces?—that women nowadays have their passions as much at will as they have their complexions, and put on joy and sadness, scorn and kindness, with the same ease they do their paint and patches? Are they the only counterfeits?

DORIMANT. You wrong your own while you suspect my eyes. By all the hope I have in you, the inimitable color in your cheeks is not more free from art than are the sighs I offer.

HARRIET. In men who have been long hardened in sin, we have reason to mistrust the first signs of repentance.

DORIMANT. The prospect of such a heaven will make me persevere and give you marks that are infallible.

HARRIET. What are those?

DORIMANT. I will renounce all the joy I have in friendship and in wine, sacrifice to you all the interest I have in other women—

HARRIET. Hold! Though I wish you devout, I would not have you turn fanatic. Could you neglect these a while and make a journey into the country?

DORIMANT. To be with you, I could live there and never send one thought to London.

HARRIET. Whate'er you say, I know all beyond Hyde Park's a desert to you, and that no gallantry can draw you farther.

DORIMANT. That has been the utmost limit of my love; but now my passion knows no bounds, and there's no measure to be taken of what I'll do for you from anything I ever did before.

HARRIET. When I hear you talk thus in Hampshire, I shall begin to think there may be some little truth enlarged upon.

DORIMANT. Is this all?—Will you not promise me?

HARRIET. I hate to promise; what we do then is expected of us and wants much of the welcome it finds when it surprises.

DORIMANT. May I not hope?

HARRIET. That depends on you and not on me, and 'tis to no purpose to forbid it. (*Turns to* BUSY)

BUSY. Faith, madam, now I perceive the gentleman loves you too; e'en let him know your mind and torment yourselves no longer.

HARRIET. Dost think I have no sense of modesty?

BUSY. Think, if you lose this you may never have another opportunity.

HARRIET. May he hate me (a curse that frightens me when I speak it), if ever I do a thing against the rules of decency and honor.

DORIMANT. (*To* EMILIA) I am beholding to you for your good intentions, madam.

EMILIA. I thought the concealing of our marriage from her might have done you better service.

DORIMANT. Try her again.

EMILIA. What are you resolved, madam? The time draws near.

HARRIET. —To be obstinate and protest against this marriage.

Enter LADY TOWNLEY *in haste*

LADY TOWNLEY. (*To* EMILIA) Quickly! quickly! let Mr. Smirk out of the closet.

[SMIRK *comes out*]

HARRIET. A parson! Had you laid him in here?

DORIMANT. I knew nothing of him.

HARRIET. Should it appear you did, your opinion of my uneasiness may cost you dear.

Enter OLD BELLAIR, YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, *and* LADY WOODVILL

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize! the canonical hour is almost past. Sister, is the man of God come?

LADY TOWNLEY. He waits your leisure.

OLD BELLAIR. [*To* SMIRK] By your favor, sir.—A dod, a pretty spruce fellow. What may we call him?

LADY TOWNLEY. Mr. Smirk—my Lady Bigot's chaplain.

OLD BELLAIR. A wise woman; a dod, she is. The man will serve for the flesh as well as the spirit. [*To* SMIRK] Please you, sir, to commission a young couple to go to bed together a-God's name? [*Calls*]—Harry!

YOUNG BELLAIR. Here, sir.

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize! Without your mistress in your hand!

SMIRK. Is this the gentleman?

OLD BELLAIR. Yes, sir.

SMIRK. Are you not mistaken, sir?

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, I think not, sir.

SMIRK. Sure, you are, sir?

OLD BELLAIR. You look as if you would forbid the banns, Mr. Smirk. I hope you have no pretension to the lady?

SMIRK. Wish him joy, sir; I have done the good office to-day already.

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize! What do I hear!

LADY TOWNLEY. Never storm, brother; the truth is out.

OLD BELLAIR. How say you, sir? Is this your wedding day?

YOUNG BELLAIR. It is, sir.

OLD BELLAIR. And a dod, it shall be mine too. (*To* EMILIA) Give me your hand, sweetheart.—What dost thou mean? Give me thy hand, I say.

(EMILIA *kneels and* YOUNG BELLAIR)

LADY TOWNLEY. Come, come! give her your blessing. This is the woman your son loved and is married to.

OLD BELLAIR. Ha! cheated! cozened! and by your contrivance, sister!

LADY TOWNLEY. What would you do with her? She 's a rogue and you can't abide her.

MEDLEY. Shall I hit her a pat for you, sir?

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, you are all rogues, and I never will forgive you.

[*He starts out*]

LADY TOWNLEY. Whither? Whither away?

MEDLEY. Let him go and cool awhile.

LADY WOODVILL. (*To* DORIMANT) Here's a business broke out now, Mr. Courtage; I am made a fine fool of.

DORIMANT. You see the old gentleman knew nothing of it.

LADY WOODVILL. I find he did not. I shall have some trick put upon me if I stay in this wicked town any longer.—Harriet, dear child, where art thou? I'll into the country straight.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, madam, you shall hear me first.

Enter MRS. LOVEIT *and* BELLINDA

MRS. LOVEIT. Hither my man dogged him.

BELLINDA. Yonder he stands, my dear.

MRS. LOVEIT. (*Aside*) I see him, and with him the face that has undone me. Oh, that I were but where I might throw out the anguish of my heart! Here, it must rage within and break it.

LADY TOWNLEY. Mrs. Loveit! Are you afraid to come forward?

MRS. LOVEIT. I was amazed to see so much company here in the morning. The occasion sure is extraordinary.

DORIMANT. (*Aside*) Loveit and Bellinda! The devil owes me a shame to-day and I think never will have done paying it.

MRS. LOVEIT. Married, dear Emilia? How am I transported with the news!

HARRIET. (*To* DORIMANT) I little thought Emilia was the woman Mr. Bellair was in love with. I'll chide her for not trusting me with the secret.

DORIMANT. How do you like Mrs. Loveit?

HARRIET. She's a famed mistress of yours, I hear.

DORIMANT. She has been on occasion.

OLD BELLAIR. (*To* LADY WOODVILL) A dod, madam, I cannot help it.

LADY WOODVILL. You need make no more apologies, sir.

EMILIA. (*To* MRS. LOVEIT) The old gentleman 's excusing himself to my Lady Woodvill.

MRS. LOVEIT. Ha, ha, ha! I never heard of anything so pleasant!

HARRIET. (*To* DORIMANT) She's extremely overjoyed at something.

DORIMANT. At nothing. She is one of those hoiting[1] ladies who gaily fling themselves about and force a laugh when their aching hearts are full of discontent and malice.

MRS. LOVEIT. O Heaven! I was never so near killing myself with laughing.—Mr. Dorimant, are you a brideman?

LADY WOODVILL. Mr. Dorimant!—Is this Mr. Dorimant, madam?

MRS. LOVEIT. If you doubt it, your daughter can resolve you, I suppose.

LADY WOODVILL. I am cheated too—basely cheated!

OLD BELLAIR. Out a pize! what's here? More knavery yet?

LADY WOODVILL. Harriet! On my blessing come away, I charge you!

HARRIET. Dear mother, do but stay and hear me.

LADY WOODVILL. I am betrayed and thou art undone, I fear.

HARRIET. Do not fear it; I have not, nor never will, do anything against my duty. Believe me, dear mother—do!

DORIMANT. (*To* MRS. LOVEIT) I had trusted you with this secret but that I knew the violence of your nature would ruin my fortune—as now unluckily it has. I thank you, madam.

MRS. LOVEIT. She's an heiress, I know, and very rich.

DORIMANT. To satisfy you, I must give up my interest wholly to my love. Had you been a reasonable woman, I might have secured 'em both and been happy.

MRS. LOVEIT. You might have trusted me with anything of this kind—you know you might. Why did you go under a wrong name?

DORIMANT. The story is too long to tell you now. Be satisfied, this is the business; this is the mask has kept me from you.

BELLINDA. (*Aside*) He's tender of my honor though he's cruel to my love.

MRS. LOVEIT. Was it no idle mistress, then?

DORIMANT. Believe me, a wife to repair the ruins of my estate—that needs it.

MRS. LOVEIT. The knowledge of this makes my grief hang lighter on my soul, but I shall never more be happy.

DORIMANT. Bellinda!

BELLINDA. Do not think of clearing yourself with me; it is impossible. Do all men break their words thus?

DORIMANT. Th'extravagant words they speak in love. 'Tis as unreasonable to expect we should perform all we promise then, as to do all we threaten when we are angry. When I see you next—

BELLINDA. Take no notice of me, and I shall not hate you.

[1] Riotous or noisy.

DORIMANT. How came you to Mrs. Loveit?

BELLINDA. By a mistake the chairmen made, for want of my giving them directions.

DORIMANT. 'Twas a pleasant one. We must meet again.

BELLINDA. Never!

DORIMANT. Never?

BELLINDA. When we do, may I be as infamous as you are false.

LADY TOWNLEY. Men of Mr. Dorimant's character always suffer in the general opinion of the world.

MEDLEY. You can make no judgment of a witty man from the common fame, considering the prevailing faction, madam.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, he's in the right.

MEDLEY. Besides, 'tis a common error among women to believe too well of them they know, and too ill of them they don't.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, he observes well.

LADY TOWNLEY. Believe me, madam, you will find Mr. Dorimant as civil a gentleman as you thought Mr. Courtage.

HARRIET. If you would but know him better—

LADY WOODVILL. You have a mind to know him better? Come away! You shall never see him more.

HARRIET. Dear mother, stay!

LADY WOODVILL. I won't be consenting to your ruin.

HARRIET. Were my fortune in your power—

LADY WOODVILL. Your person is.

HARRIET. Could I be disobedient, I might take it out of yours and put it into his.

LADY WOODVILL. 'Tis that you would be at?—You would marry this Dorimant?

HARRIET. I cannot deny it; I would, and never will marry any other man.

LADY WOODVILL. Is this the duty that you promised?

HARRIET. But I will never marry him against your will.

LADY WOODVILL. (*Aside*) She knows the way to melt my heart. [*Aloud*] Upon yourself light your undoing!

MEDLEY. (*To* OLD BELLAIR) Come, sir, you have not the heart any longer to refuse your blessing.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, I ha' not.—Rise, and God bless you both! Make much of her, Harry; she deserves thy kindness. (*To* EMILIA) A dod, sirrah, I did not think it had been in thee!

Enter SIR FOPLING *and* Page

SIR FOPLING. 'Tis a damned windy day. Hey, page, is my periwig right?

PAGE. A little out of order, sir.

SIR FOPLING. Pox o' this apartment! It wants an antechamber to adjust oneself in. (*To* MRS. LOVEIT) Madam, I came from your house, and your servants directed me hither.

MRS. LOVEIT. I shall give order hereafter they shall direct you better.

SIR FOPLING. The great satisfaction I had in the Mall last night has given me much disquiet since.

MRS. LOVEIT. 'Tis likely to give me more than I desire.

SIR FOPLING. [*Aside*] What the devil makes her so reserved? [*Aloud*]—Am I guilty of an indiscretion, madam?

MRS. LOVEIT. You will be—of a great one—if you continue your mistake, sir.

SIR FOPLING. Something's put you out of humor?

MRS. LOVEIT. The most foolish, inconsiderable thing that ever did.

SIR FOPLING. Is it in my power?

MRS. LOVEIT. —To hang or drown it. Do one of 'em and trouble me no more.

SIR FOPLING. So *fière? Serviteur, madam.* —Medley, where 's Dorimant?

MEDLEY. Methinks the lady has not made you those advances to-day she did last night, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. Prithee, do not talk of her!

MEDLEY. She would be a *bonne fortune.*

SIR FOPLING. Not to me at present.

MEDLEY. How so?

SIR FOPLING. An intrigue now would be but a temptation to me to throw away that

vigor on which I mean I shall shortly make my court to the whole sex in a ballet.

MEDLEY. Wisely considered, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. No one woman is worth the loss of a cut in a caper.

MEDLEY. Not when 'tis so universally designed.

LADY WOODVILL. Mr. Dorimant, everyone has spoke so much in your behalf that I can no longer doubt but I was in the wrong.

MRS. LOVEIT. There's nothing but falsehood and impertinence in this world! All men are villains or fools; take example from my misfortunes, Bellinda; if thou wouldst be happy, give thyself wholly up to goodness.

HARRIET. (*To* MRS. LOVEIT) Mr. Dorimant has been your God Almighty long enough; 'tis time to think of another.

MRS. LOVEIT. [*Aside*] Jeered by her! [*Aloud*] I will lock myself up in my house and never see the world again.

HARRIET. A nunnery is the more fashionable place for such a retreat, and has been the fatal consequence of many a *belle passion.*

MRS. LOVEIT. [*Aside*] Hold, heart, till I get home! Should I answer, 'twould make her triumph greater. [*Starts to go out*]

DORIMANT. Your hand, Sir Fopling—

SIR FOPLING. Shall I wait upon you, madam?

MRS. LOVEIT. Legion of fools, as many devils take thee! *Exit* MRS. LOVEIT

MEDLEY. Dorimant, I pronounce thy reputation clear; and henceforward when I would know anything of woman, I will consult no other oracle.

SIR FOPLING. [*Looking after* MRS. LOVEIT] Stark mad, by all that's handsome!—Dorimant, thou hast engaged me in a pretty business.

DORIMANT. I have not leisure now to talk about it.

OLD BELLAIR. [*Spying* SIR FOPLING] Out a pize! what does this man of mode do here again?

LADY TOWNLEY. He'll be an excellent entertainment within, brother, and is luckily come to raise the mirth of the company.

LADY WOODVILL. Madam, I take my leave of you.

LADY TOWNLEY. What do you mean, madam?

LADY WOODVILL. To go this afternoon part of my way to Hartley.

OLD BELLAIR. A dod, you shall stay and dine first! Come, we will all be good friends, and you shall give Mr. Dorimant leave to wait upon you and your daughter in the country.

LADY WOODVILL. If his occasions bring him that way; I have now so good an opinion of him, he shall be welcome.

HARRIET. —To a great rambling, lone house that looks as if it were not inhabited, the family's so small. There you'll find my mother, an old lame aunt, and myself, sir, perched up on chairs at a distance in a great parlor, sitting moping like four melancholy birds in a spacious volery.[1] Does not this stagger your resolution?

DORIMANT. Not at all, madam. The first time I saw you you left me with the pangs of love upon me, and this day my soul has quite given up her liberty.

HARRIET. This is more dismal than the country! Emilia, pity me, who am going to that sad place. Methinks I hear the hateful noise of rooks already—*Kaw, kaw, kaw*! There's music in the worst cry in London, "My dill and cowcumbers to pickle!"

OLD BELLAIR. Sister, knowing of this matter, I hope you have provided us some good cheer.

LADY TOWNLEY. I have, brother, and the fiddles too.

OLD BELLAIR. Let 'em strike up, then; the young lady shall have a dance before she departs. (*They dance*) (*After the dance*)—So! Now we'll in and make this an arrant wedding-day. (*To the pit*)

And if these honest gentlemen rejoice,
A dod, the boy has made a happy choice.

Exeunt Omnes

[1] aviary.

THE EPILOGUE

By Mr. Dryden

Most modern wits such monstrous fools have shown,
They seem'd not of Heav'n's making, but their own.
Those nauseous harlequins in farce may pass,
But there goes more to a substantial ass.
Something of man must be exposed to view
That, gallants, they may more resemble you.
Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ,
The ladies would mistake him for a wit;
And when he sings, talks loud, and cocks, would cry,
"I vow, methinks he's pretty company!"
So brisk, so gay, so travelled, so refined
As he, took pains to graft upon his kind.
True fops help nature's work and go to school,
To file and finish God a'mighty's fool.
Yet none Sir Fopling him, or him, can call;
He's knight o'th' shire, and represents ye all.
From each he meets, he culls whate'er he can;
Legion's his name, a people in a man.
His bulky folly gathers as it goes
And, rolling o'er you, like a snowball grows.
His various modes, from various fathers follow;
One taught the toss, and one the new French wallow.
His sword-knot, this; his cravat, this, designed;
And this, the yard-long snake he twirls behind.
From one the sacred periwig he gained,
Which wind ne'er blew, nor touch of hat prophaned.
Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which with a shog[1] casts all his hair before
Till he with full decorum brings it back,
And rises with a water spaniel's shake.
As for his songs (the ladies' dear delight),
Those sure he took from most of you who write.
Yet every man is safe from what he feared,
For no one fool is hunted from the herd.

1 shake.

AURENG-ZEBE

A Tragedy by John Dryden

Sed, cum fregit subsellia versu,
Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendit Agaven.

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ]

The Old Emperor
Aureng-Zebe, his son [by a former wife]
Morat, his younger son [by Nourmahal]
Arimant, Governor of Agra
Dianet
Solyman [Aga]
Mir Baba
Abas
Asaph Khan
Fazel Khan
} Indian Lords, or Omrahs, of several factions
Nourmahal, the Empress
Indamora, a captive queen
Melesinda, wife to Morat
Zayda, favorite slave to the Empress

[Attendants, Mutes, Priests, and Soldiers]

Scene: *Agra, in the year 1660*

[DEDICATION]

To the Right Honorable John,
Earl of Mulgrave,

Gentleman of His Majesty's Bedchamber, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter

My Lord,

It is a severe reflection which Montaigne has made on princes, that we ought not, in reason, to have any expectations of favor from them; and that 'tis kindness enough, if they leave us in possession of our own. The boldness of the censure shows the free spirit of the author, and the subjects of England may justly congratulate to themselves, that both the nature of our government, and the clemency of our King, secure us from any such complaint. I, in particular. who subsist wholly by his bounty, am obliged to give posterity a far other account of my royal master than what Montaigne has left of his. Those accusations had been more reasonable if they had been placed on inferior persons. For in all courts, there are too many who make it their business to ruin wit; and Montaigne, in other places, tells us what effects he found of their good natures. He describes them such, whose ambition, lust, or private interest, seem to be the only end of their creation. If good accrue to any from them, it is only in order to their own designs, conferred most commonly on the base and infamous, and never given, but only hap'ning sometimes, on well-deservers. Dulness has brought them to what they are and malice secures them in their fortunes. But somewhat of specious they must have, to recommend themselves to princes (for folly will not easily go down in its own natural form with discerning judges), and diligence in waiting is their gilding of the pill; for that looks like love, though 'tis only interest. 'Tis that which gains 'em their advantage over witty men, whose love of liberty and ease makes them willing too often to discharge their burden of attendance on these officious gentlemen. 'Tis true that the nauseousness of such company is enough to disgust a reasonable man when he sees he can hardly approach greatness but as a moated castle; he must first pass through the mud and filth with which it is encompassed. These are they who, wanting wit, affect gravity and go by the name of "solid" men; and a solid man is, in plain English, a solid, solemn fool. Another disguise they have (for fools as well as knaves, take other names, and pass by an alias), and that is, the title of "honest fellows." But this honesty of theirs ought to have many grains for its allowance; for certainly they are no further honest than they are silly. They are naturally mischievous to their power; and if they speak not maliciously, or sharply,

of witty men, 'tis only because God has not bestowed on them the gift of utterance. They fawn and crouch to men of parts, whom they cannot ruin; quote their wit when they are present, and, when they are absent, steal their jests. But to those who are under them, and whom they can crush with ease, they show themselves in their natural antipathy; there they treat wit like the common enemy, and giving no more quarter than a Dutchman would to an English vessel in the Indies. They strike sail where they know they shall be mastered, and murder where they can with safety.

This, my Lord, is the character of a courtier without wit; and, therefore, that which is a satire to other men must be a panegyric to your Lordship, who are a master of it. If the least of these reflections could have reached your person, no necessity of mine could have made me to have sought so earnestly and so long to have cultivated your kindness. As a poet, I cannot but have made some observations on mankind. The lowness of my fortune has not yet brought me to flatter vice, and it is my duty to give testimony to virtue. 'Tis true, your Lordship is not of that nature which either seeks a commendation, or wants it. Your mind has always been above the wretched affectation of popularity. A popular man is, in truth, no better than a prostitute to common fame and to the people. He lies down to everyone he meets for the hire of praise, and his humility is only a disguised ambition. Even Cicero himself, whose eloquence deserved the admiration of mankind, yet, by his insatiable thirst of fame, he has lessened his character with succeeding ages. His action against Catiline may be said to have ruined the consul, when it saved the city; for it so swelled his soul, which was not truly great, that ever afterwards it was apt to be overset with vanity. And this made his virtue so suspected by his friends that Brutus, whom of all men he adored, refused him a place in his conspiracy. A modern wit has made this observation on him: that, coveting to recommend himself to posterity, he begged it as an alms of all his friends, the historians, to remember his consulship. And observe, if you please, the oddness of the event; all their histories are lost, and the vanity of his request stands yet recorded in his own writings. How much more great and manly in your Lordship, is your contempt of popular applause and your retired virtue, which shines only to a few; with whom you live so easily and freely that you make it evident, you have a soul which is capable of all the tenderness of friendship, and that you only retire yourself from those who are not capable of returning it. Your kindness, where you have once placed it, is inviolable; and it is to that only I attribute my happiness in your love. This makes me more easily forsake an argument on which I could otherwise delight to dwell; I mean, your judgment in your choice of friends, because I have the honor to be one. After which, I am sure you will more easily permit me to be silent, in the care you have taken of my fortune, which you have rescued, not only from the power of others, but from my worst of enemies, my own modesty and laziness; which favor, had it been employed on a more deserving subject, had been an effect of justice in your nature; but, as placed on me, is only charity. Yet, withal, it is conferred on such a man as prefers your kindness itself before any of its consequences, and who values as the greatest of your favors, those of your love and of your conversation. From this constancy to your friends, I might reasonably assume that your resentments would be as strong and lasting, if they were not restrained by a nobler principle of good nature and generosity; for certainly 'tis the same composition of mind, the same resolution and courage, which makes the greatest friendships, and the greatest enmities. And he who is too lightly reconciled after high provocations, may recommend himself to the world for a Christian, but I should hardly trust him for a friend. The Italians have a proverb to that purpose, "To forgive the first time shows me a good Catholic; the second time, a fool." To this firmness in all your actions (though you are wanting in no other ornaments of mind and body), yet to this I principally ascribe the interest your merits have acquired you in the royal family. A prince who is constant to himself, and steady in all his undertakings; one with whom that character of Horace will agree—

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ;—

such an one cannot but place an esteem and repose a confidence on him whom no adversity, no change of courts, no bribery of interests, or cabals of factions, or advantages of fortune, can remove from the solid foundations of honor and fidelity:

Ille meos, primus qui me sibi junxit, amores
Abstulit; ille habeat secum, servetque sepulcro.

How well your Lordship will deserve that praise, I need no inspiration to foretell. You have already left no room for prophecy. Your early undertakings have been such, in the service of your king and country; when you offered yourself to the most dangerous employment, that of the sea; when you chose to abandon those delights to which your youth and fortune did invite you, to undergo the hazards, and, which was worse, the company of common seamen, that you have made it evident, you will refuse no opportunity of rendering yourself useful to the nation, when either your courage or conduct shall be required. The same zeal and faithfulness continue in your blood which animated one of your noble ancestors to sacrifice his life in the quarrels of his sovereign; though I hope, both for your sake and the public tranquillity, the same occasion will never be offered to your Lordship, and that a better destiny will attend you. But I make haste to consider you as abstracted from a court which (if you will give me leave to use a term of logic) is only an adjunct, not a propriety of happiness. The Academics, I confess, were willing to admit the goods of fortune into their notion of felicity; but I do not remember that any of the sects of old philosophers did ever leave a room for greatness. Neither am I formed to praise a court who admire and covet nothing but the easiness and quiet of retirement. I naturally withdraw my sight from a precipice; and, admit the prospect be never so large and goodly, can take no pleasure even in looking on the downfall, though I am secure from the danger. Methinks, there's something of a malignant joy in that excellent description of Lucretius—

Suave, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quemquamst jucunda voluptas,
Sed quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.

I am sure his master Epicurus, and my better master Cowley, preferred the solitude of a garden and the conversation of a friend, to any consideration, so much as a regard of those unhappy people whom, in our own wrong, we call the great. True greatness, if it be anywhere on earth, is in a private virtue, removed from the motion of pomp and vanity, confined to a contemplation of itself, and centring on itself—

Omnis enim per se Divûm natura necessest
Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur;
. . . curâ semota, metuque . . .
Ipsa suis pollens opibus. . . .

If this be not the life of a deity, because it cannot consist with Providence, it is, at least, a god-like life. I can be contented (and I am sure I have your Lordship of my opinion) with an humbler station in the temple of virtue than to be set on the pinnacle of it—

Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.

The truth is, the consideration of so vain a creature as man, is not worth our pains. I have fool enough at home, without looking for it abroad, and am a sufficient theatre to myself of ridiculous actions, without expecting company, either in a court, a town, or playhouse. 'Tis on this account that I am weary with drawing the deformities of life, and lazars of the people, where every figure of imperfection more resembles me than it can do others. If I must be condemned to rhyme, I should find some ease in my change of punishment. I desire to be no longer the Sisyphus of the stage; to roll up a stone with endless labor (which, to follow the proverb, gathers no moss), and which is perpetually falling down again. I never thought myself very fit for an employment where many of my predecessors have excelled me in all kinds, and some of my contemporaries, even in my own partial judgment, have outdone me in Comedy. Some little hopes I have yet remaining, and those too, considering my abilities, may be vain, that I may make the world some part of amends for many ill plays by an heroic poem. Your Lordship has been long acquainted with my design, the subject of which you know is great, the story English, and neither too far distant from the present age, nor too near approaching it. Such it is, in my opinion, that I could not have wished a nobler occasion to do honor by it to my King, my country, and my friends, most of our ancient nobility being concerned in the action. And your Lordship has one particular reason to promote this undertaking, because you were the first who gave me the opportunity of discoursing it to his Majesty and his Royal Highness. They were then pleased, both to commend the design and to encourage it by their commands. But the unsettledness of my condition has hitherto put a stop to my thoughts concerning it. As I am no successor to Homer in his wit, so neither do I desire to be in his

poverty. I can make no rhapsodies, nor go a-begging at the Grecian doors, while I sing the praises of their ancestors. The times of Virgil please me better, because he had an Augustus for his patron; and, to draw the allegory nearer you, I am sure I shall not want a Mæcenas with him. 'Tis for your Lordship to stir up that remembrance in his Majesty which his many avocations of business have caused him, I fear, to lay aside; and, as himself and his royal brother are the heroes of the poem, to represent to them the images of their warlike predecessors, as Achilles is said to be roused to glory with the sight of the combat before the ships. For my own part, I am satisfied to have offered the design, and it may be to the advantage of my reputation to have it refused me.

In the meantime, my Lord, I take the confidence to present you with a tragedy, the characters of which are the nearest to those of an heroic poem. 'Twas dedicated to you in my heart before 'twas presented on the stage. Some things in it have passed your approbation, and many your amendment. You were likewise pleased to recommend it to the King's perusal before the last hand was added to it, when I received the favor from him to have the most considerable event of it modelled by his royal pleasure.[1] It may be some vanity in me to add his testimony, then, and which he graciously confirmed afterwards, that it was the best of all my tragedies; in which he has made authentic my private opinion of it: at least, he has given it a value by his commendation which it had not by my writing.

That which was not pleasing to some of the fair ladies in the last act of it, as I dare not vindicate so neither can I wholly condemn till I find more reason for their censures. The procedure of Indamora and Melesinda seems yet, in my judgment, natural and not unbecoming of their characters. If they who arraign them, fail not more, the world will never blame their conduct; and I shall be glad, for the honor of my country, to find better images of virtue drawn to the life in their behavior than any I could feign to adorn the theatre. I confess, I have only represented a practicable virtue mixed with the frailties and imperfections of human life. I have made my heroine fearful of death, which neither Cassandra nor Cleopatra would have been; and they themselves, I doubt it not, would have outdone romance in that particular. Yet their Mandana (and the *Cyrus* was written by a lady) was not altogether so hard-hearted. For she sat down on the cold ground by the king of Assyria, and not only pitied him who died in her defence, but allowed him some favors such, perhaps, as they would think should only be permitted to her Cyrus. I have made my Melesinda, in opposition to Nourmahal, a woman passionately loving of her husband, patient of injuries and contempt, and constant in her kindness to the last; and in that, perhaps, I may have erred, because it is not a virtue much in use. Those Indian wives are loving fools and may do well to keep themselves in their own country, or, at least, to keep company with the Arrias and Portias of old Rome. Some of our ladies know better things. But it may be I am partial to my own writings; yet I have labored as much as any man to divest myself of the self-opinion of an author, and am too well satisfied of my own weakness to be pleased with anything I have written. But on the other side, my reason tells me that in probability what I have seriously and long considered may be as likely to be just and natural as what an ordinary judge (if there be any such among those ladies) will think fit, in a transient presentation, to be placed in the room of that which they condemn. The most judicious writer is sometimes mistaken, after all his care; but the hasty critic, who judges on a view, is full as liable to be deceived. Let him first consider all the arguments which the author had, to write this, or to design the other, before he arraigns him of a fault; and then perhaps, on second thoughts, he will find his reason oblige him to revoke his censure. Yet, after all, I will not be too positive. *Homo sum, humani à me nihil alienum puto.* As I am a man, I must be changeable, and sometimes the gravest of us all are so, even upon ridiculous accidents. Our minds are perpetually wrought on by the temperament of our bodies, which makes me suspect they are nearer allied than either our philosophers or school-divines will allow them to be. I have observed, says Montaigne, that when the body is out of order, its companion is seldom at his ease. An ill dream, or a cloudy day, has power to change this wretched creature, who is so proud of a reasonable soul, and make him think what he thought not yesterday. And Homer was of this opinion, as Cicero is pleased to translate him for us—

Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse
Jupiter auctifera lustravit lampade terras.

[1] A common form of flattery.

Or, as the same author, in his *Tusculan Questions*, speaks, with more modesty than usual, of himself: *Nos in diem vivimus; quodcunque animos nostros probabilitate percussit, id dicimus.* 'Tis not, therefore, impossible but that I may alter the conclusion of my play, to restore myself into the good graces of my fair critics; and your Lordship, who is so well with them, may do me the office of a friend and patron to intercede with them on my promise of amendment. The impotent lover in Petronius, though his was a very unpardonable crime, yet was received to mercy on the terms I offer. *Summa . . . excusationis meæ hæc est: Placebo tibi, si* [*me*] *culpam emendare permiseris.*

But I am conscious to myself of offering at a greater boldness, in presenting to your view what my meanness can produce, than in any other error of my play; and therefore make haste to break off this tedious address, which has, I know not how, already run itself into so much of pedantry, with an excuse of Tully's, which he sent with his books *De Finibus* to his friend Brutus: *De ipsis rebus autem sæpenumero, Brute, vereor ne reprehendar, cum hæc ad te scribam, qui tum in poesi* (I change it from *philosophiâ*), *tum in optimo genere poeseos tantum processeris. Quod si facerem quasi te erudiens, jure reprehenderer. Sed ab eo plurimum absum, neque*[1] *ut ea cognoscas quæ tibi notissima sunt, ad te mitto, sed quia facillime in nomine tuo acquiesco et quia te habeo æquissimum eorum studiorum quæ mihi communia tecum sunt* [*exi*][2]*stimatorem et judicem.* Which you may please, my Lord, to apply to yourself, from him who is

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servant,

John Dryden

PROLOGUE

Our author, by experience, finds it true,
'Tis much more hard to please himself than you;
And out of no feigned modesty, this day,
Damns his laborious trifle of a play:
Not that it's worse than what before he writ,
But he has now another taste of wit;
And, to confess a truth, though out of time,
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme.
Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
And nature flies him like enchanted ground.
What verse can do, he has performed in this,
Which he presumes the most correct of his;
But spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his breast at Shakespeare's sacred name:
Awed when he hears his godlike Romans rage,
He, in a just despair, would quit the stage;
And to an age less polished, more unskilled,
Does, with disdain, the foremost honors yield.
As with the greater dead he dares not strive,
He would not match his verse with those who live:
Let him retire, betwixt two ages cast,
The first of this, and hindmost of the last.
A losing gamester, let him sneak away;
He bears no ready money from the play.
The fate which governs poets, thought it fit
He should not raise his fortunes by his wit.
The clergy thrive, and the litigious bar;
Dull heroes fatten with the spoils of war;
All southern vices, Heaven be praised, are here;
But wit 's a luxury you think too dear.
When you to cultivate the plant are loth,
'Tis a shrewd sign 'twas never of your growth;
And wit in northern climates will not blow,
Except, like orange-trees, 'tis housed from snow.
There needs no care to put a playhouse down;
'Tis the most desert place of all the town.
We and our neighbors, to speak proudly, are,
Like monarchs, ruined with expensive war;
While, like wise English, unconcerned you sit,
And see us play the tragedy of wit.

1 Q1 *Nec.* 2 Q1 *ae-.*

ACT I

[*A court of the palace*]

[*Enter*] ARIMANT, ASAPH KHAN, [*and*] FAZEL KHAN[1]

ARIMANT. Heav'n seems the empire of the east to lay
On the success of this important day.
Their arms are to the last decision bent,
And Fortune labors with the vast event;

1 Q1 *Chaun*: prince.

She now has in her hand the greatest stake
Which for contending monarchs she can make.
Whate'er can urge ambitious youth to fight,
She pompously displays before their sight—
Laws, empire, all permitted to the sword,
And fate could ne'er an ampler scene afford.
ASAPH. Four several armies to the field are led,
Which, high in equal hopes, four princes head.
Indus and Ganges, our wide empire's bounds,
Swell their dyed currents with their natives' wounds;
Each purple river winding, as he runs,
His bloody arms about his slaughtered sons.
FAZEL. I well remember you foretold the storm,
When first the brothers did their factions form;
When each, by cursed cabals of women, strove
To draw th'indulgent king to partial love.
ARIMANT. What Heav'n decrees, no prudence can prevent.
To cure their mad ambition, they were sent
To rule a distant province each alone:
What could a careful father more have done?
He made provision against all but fate;
While, by his health, we held our peace of state.
The weight of seventy winters pressed him down;
He bent beneath the burden of a crown.
Sickness, at last, did his spent body seize,
And life almost sunk under the disease.
Mortal, 'twas thought, at least by them desired
Who, impiously, into his years inquired.
As at a signal, straight the sons prepare
For open force, and rush to sudden war;
Meeting, like winds broke loose upon the main,
To prove, by arms, whose fate it was to reign.
ASAPH. Rebels and parricides!
ARIMANT. Brand not their actions with so foul a name;
Pity at least what we are forced to blame.
When Death's cold hand has closed the father's eye,
You know the younger sons are doomed to die.
Less ills are chosen, greater to avoid,
And nature's laws are by the state's destroyed.
What courage tamely could to death consent,
And not, by striking first, the blow prevent?
Who falls in fight, cannot himself accuse,
And he dies greatly who a crown pursues.

[*Enter*] *to them* SOLYMAN AGA

SOLYMAN. A new express all Agra does affright;
Darah and Aureng-Zebe are joined in fight.
The press of people thickens to the court,
Th'impatient crowd devouring the report.
ARIMANT. T'each changing news the changed affections bring,
And servilely from fate expect a king.
SOLYMAN. The ministers of state, who gave us law,
In corners, with selected friends, withdraw;
There, in deaf murmurs, solemnly are wise,
Whisp'ring, like winds, ere hurricanes arise.
The most corrupt are most obsequious grown,
And those they scorned, officiously they own.
ASAPH. In change of government
The rabble rule their great oppressors' fate;
Do sovereign justice, and revenge the state.
SOLYMAN. The little courtiers, who ne'er come to know
The depth of factions, as in mazes go,
Where interests meet and cross so oft that they,
With too much care, are 'wildered in their way.
ARIMANT. What of the emperor?
SOLYMAN. Unmoved and brave, he like himself appears,
And meriting no ill no danger fears;
Yet mourns his former vigor lost so far,
To make him now spectator of a war.
Repining that he must preserve his crown
By any help or courage but his own,
Wishes, each minute, he could unbeget
Those rebel sons who dare t'usurp his seat—

To sway his empire with unequal skill,
And mount a throne which none but he can fill.

ARIMANT. Oh, had he still that character maintained,
Of valor which, in blooming youth, he gained!
He promised in his east a glorious race;
Now, sunk from his meridian, sets apace.
But as the sun when he from noon declines,
And, with abated heat, less fiercely shines,
Seems to grow milder as he goes away,
Pleasing himself with the remains of day;
So he who, in his youth, for glory strove,
Would recompense his age with ease and love.

ASAPH. The name of father hateful to him grows,
Which, for one son, produces him three foes.

FAZEL. Darah, the eldest, bears a generous mind,
But to implacable revenge inclined
Too openly does love and hatred show;
A bounteous master, but a deadly foe.

SOLYMAN. From Sujah's valor I should much expect,
But he's a bigot of the Persian sect;
And by a foreign interest seeks to reign,
Hopeless by love the sceptre to obtain.

ASAPH. Morat's too insolent, too much a brave;
His courage to his envy is a slave.
What he attempts, if his endeavors fail
T'effect, he is resolved no other shall.

ARIMANT. But Aureng-Zebe, by no strong passion swayed
Except his love, more temperate is and weighed.
This Atlas must our sinking state uphold;
In council cool, but in performance bold.
He sums their virtues in himself alone,
And adds the greatest, of a loyal son:
His father's cause upon his sword he wears,
And with his arms, we hope, his fortune bears.

SOLYMAN. To vast rewards may well his courage move,
A parent's blessing, and a mistress' love.
If he succeed, his recompense, we hear,
Must be the captive queen of Cassimere.

[Enter] to them ABAS

ABAS. Mischiefs on mischiefs, greater still, and more!
The neighb'ring plain with arms is covered o'er;
The vale an iron harvest seems to yield,
Of thick-sprung lances in a waving field.
The polished steel gleams terribly from far,
And every moment nearer shows the war.
The horses' neighing by the wind is blown,
And castled elephants o'erlook the town.

ARIMANT. If, as I fear, Morat these powers commands,
Our empire on the brink of ruin stands;
The ambitious empress with her son is joined,
And, in his brother's absence, has designed
The unprovided town to take with ease;
And then the person of the king to seize.

SOLYMAN. To all his former issue she has shown
Long hate, and labored to advance her own.

ABAS. These troops are his.
Surat he took; and thence, preventing fame,
By quick and painful marches hither came.
Since his approach, he to his mother sent,
And two long hours in close debate were spent.

ARIMANT. I'll to my charge, the citadel, repair,
And show my duty by my timely care.
[Exit ARIMANT]

[Enter] to them the EMPEROR, *with a letter in his hand; after him an* Ambassador, *with a train following*

ASAPH. But see, the emperor! a fiery red
His brows and glowing temples does o'erspread;
Morat has some displeasing message sent.
Exit with the other Omrahs

AMBASSADOR. Do not, great sir, misconstrue his intent,
Nor call rebellion what was prudent care
To guard himself by necessary war.
While he believed you living, he obeyed;
His governments but as your viceroy swayed;
But when he thought you gone

T'augment the number of the bless'd above,
He deemed 'em legacies of royal love;
Nor armed his brothers' portions to invade,
But to defend the present you had made.
EMPEROR. By frequent messages and strict commands,
He knew my pleasure to discharge his bands.
Proof of my life my royal signet made;
Yet still he armed, came on, and disobeyed.
AMBASSADOR. He thought the mandate forged, your death concealed;
And but delayed till truth should be revealed.
EMPEROR. News of my death from rumor he received,
And what he wished he easily believed.
But long demurred, though from my hand he knew
I lived, so loth he was to think it true.
Since he pleads ignorance to that command,
Now let him show his duty and disband.
AMBASSADOR. His honor, sir, will suffer in the cause;
He yields his arms unjust if he withdraws:
And begs his loyalty may be declared,
By owning those he leads to be your guard.
EMPEROR. I, in myself, have all the guard I need!
Bid the presumptuous boy draw off with speed:
If his audacious troops one hour remain,
My cannon from the fort shall scour the plain.
AMBASSADOR. Since you deny him entrance, he demands
His wife, whom cruelly you hold in bands.
Her, if unjustly you from him detain,
He justly will, by force of arms, regain.
EMPEROR. O'er him and his a right from Heav'n I have;
Subject and son, he's doubly born my slave.
But whatsoe'er his own demerits are,
Tell him, I shall not make on women war.
And yet I'll do her innocence the grace,
To keep her here, as in the safer place.
But thou, who dar'st this bold defiance bring,
May'st feel the rage of an offended king.
Hence, from my sight, without the least reply!
One word—nay one look more, and thou shalt die.

Exit Ambassador [*and his train*]

Re-enter ARIMANT

ARIMANT. May Heav'n, great monarch, still augment your bliss
With length of days, and every day like this!
For, from the banks of Gemna[1] news is brought,
Your army has a bloody battle fought:
Darah from loyal Aureng-Zebe is fled,
And forty thousand of his men lie dead.
To Sujah next your conquering army drew:
Him they surprised, and easily o'erthrew.
EMPEROR. 'Tis well.
ARIMANT. But well! What more could at your wish be done,
Than two such conquests gained by such a son?
Your pardon, mighty sir;
You seem not high enough your joys to rate;
You stand indebted a vast sum to fate,
And should large thanks for the great blessing pay.
EMPEROR. My fortune owes me greater every day;
And should my joy more high for this appear,
It would have argued me, before, of fear.
How is Heav'n kind where I have nothing won,
And Fortune only pays me with my own?
ARIMANT. Great Aureng-Zebe did duteous care express,
And durst not push too far his good success;
But, lest Morat the city should attack,
Commanded his victorious army back;
Which, left to march as swiftly as they may,
Himself comes first, and will be here this day
Before a close-formed siege shut up his way.
EMPEROR. Prevent his purpose! hence, hence, with all thy speed!
Stop him; his entrance to the town forbid!
ARIMANT. How, sir? your loyal, your victorious son?
EMPEROR. Him would I, more than all the rebels, shun.

[1] The river flowing through Agra.

ARIMANT. Whom with your power and fortune, sir, you trust,
Now to suspect is vain, as 'tis unjust.
He comes not with a train to move your fear,
But trusts himself to be a pris'ner here.
You knew him brave, you know him faithful now:
He aims at fame, but fame from serving you.
'Tis said, ambition in his breast does rage;
Who would not be the hero of an age?
All grant him prudent. Prudence interest weighs,
And interest bids him seek your love and praise.
I know you grateful; when he marched from hence,
You bade him hope an ample recompense:
He conquered in that hope, and, from your hands,
His love, the precious pledge he left, demands.

EMPEROR. No more! you search too deep my wounded mind,
And show me what I fear and would not find.
My son has all the debts of duty paid:
Our prophet sends him to my present aid.
Such virtue to distrust were base and low;
I'm not ungrateful—or, I was not so!
Inquire no further, stop his coming on!
I will not, cannot, dare not, see my son.

ARIMANT. 'Tis now too late his entrance to prevent,
Nor must I to your ruin give consent.
At once your people's heart and son's, you lose,
And give him all when you just things refuse.

EMPEROR. Thou lov'st me, sure; thy faith has oft been tried,
In ten pitched fields not shrinking from my side;
Yet giv'st me no advice to bring me ease.

ARIMANT. Can you be cured and tell not your disease?
I asked you, sir.

EMPEROR. Thou shouldst have asked again;
There hangs a secret shame on guilty men.
Thou shouldst have pulled the secret from my breast,
Torn out the bearded[1] steel, to give me rest;
At least, thou shouldst have guessed—
Yet thou art honest, thou couldst ne'er have guessed.
Hast thou been never base? did love ne'er bend
Thy frailer virtue, to betray thy friend?
Flatter me, make thy court, and say, "It did."
Kings in a crowd would have their vices hid.
We would be kept in count'nance, saved from shame,
And owned by others who commit the same.
[*Whispers*]
—Nay, now I have confessed.
Thou seest me naked, and without disguise:
I look on Aureng-Zebe with rival's eyes.
He has abroad my enemies o'ercome,
And I have sought to ruin him at home.

ARIMANT. This free confession shows you long did strive;
And virtue, though oppressed, is still alive.
But what success did your injustice find?

EMPEROR. What it deserved, and not what I designed.
Unmoved she stood, and deaf to all my prayers
As seas and winds to sinking mariners.
But seas grow calm, and winds are reconciled:
Her tyrant beauty never grows more mild.
Prayers, promises, and threats, were all in vain.

ARIMANT. Then cure yourself by generous disdain.

EMPEROR. Virtue, disdain, despair, I oft have tried,
And, foiled, have with new arms my foe defied.
This made me with so little joy to hear
The victory when I the victor fear.

ARIMANT. Something you swiftly must resolve to do,
Lest Aureng-Zebe your secret love should know.

[1] barbed.

Morat without does for your ruin wait;
And would you lose the buckler of your state?
A jealous empress lies within your arms,
Too haughty to endure neglected charms.
Your son is duteous, but, as man, he's frail,
And just revenge o'er virtue may prevail.
EMPEROR. Go then to Indamora; say, from me,
Two lives depend upon her secrecy.
Bid her conceal my passion from my son.
Though Aureng-Zebe return a conqueror,
Both he and she are still within my power.
Say, I'm a father, but a lover too;
Much to my son, more to myself I owe.
When she receives him, to her words give law,
And even the kindness of her glances awe.
See, he appears!
After a short whisper ARIMANT *departs*

Enter AURENG-ZEBE, DIANET, *and* Attendants.—AURENG-ZEBE *kneels to his father, and kisses his hand*

AURENG-ZEBE. My vows have been successful as my sword.
My prayers are heard; you have your health restored.
Once more 'tis given me to behold your face,
The best of kings and fathers to embrace.
Pardon my tears; 'tis joy which bids them flow,
A joy which never was sincere[1] till now.
That which my conquest gave, I could not prize,
Or 'twas imperfect till I saw your eyes.
EMPEROR. Turn the discourse: I have a reason why
I would not have you speak so tenderly.
Knew you what shame your kind expressions bring,
You would, in pity, spare a wretched king.
AURENG-ZEBE. A king! you rob me, sir, of half my due;
You have a dearer name—a father too.
EMPEROR. I had that name.
AURENG-ZEBE. What have I said or done,
That I no longer must be called your son?

[1] pure.

'Tis in that name, Heav'n knows, I glory more
Than that of prince, or that of conqueror.
EMPEROR. Then you upbraid me. I am pleased to see
You're not so perfect but can fail, like me.
I have no God to deal with.
AURENG-ZEBE. Now I find,
Some sly court-devil has seduced your mind;
Filled it with black suspicions not your own,
And all my actions through false optics shown.
I ne'er did crowns ambitiously regard;
Honor I sought—the generous mind's reward.
Long may you live! while you the sceptre sway,
I shall be still most happy to obey.
EMPEROR. O Aureng-Zebe! thy virtues shine too bright,
They flash too fierce: I, like a bird of night,
Shut my dull eyes, and sicken at the sight.
Thou hast deserved more love than I can show;
But 'tis thy fate to give, and mine to owe.
Thou seest me much distempered in my mind,
Pulled back, and then pushed forward to be kind.
Virtue and—fain I would my silence break,
But have not yet the confidence to speak—
Leave me, and to thy needful rest repair.
AURENG-ZEBE. Rest is not suiting with a lover's care.
I have not yet my Indamora seen. (*Is going*)
EMPEROR. Somewhat I had forgot; come back again!
So weary of a father's company?
AURENG-ZEBE. Sir, you were pleased yourself to license me.
EMPEROR. You made me no relation of the fight;
Besides, a rebel's army is in sight.
Advise me first—yet go! (*Aside*)
He goes to Indamora; I should take
A kind of envious joy to keep him back.
Yet to detain him makes my love appear;
I hate his presence and his absence fear.
[*Exeunt* EMPEROR *and his* Attendants]

AURENG-ZEBE. To some new clime, or to thy native sky,
O friendless and forsaken Virtue, fly!
Thy Indian air is deadly to thee grown;
Deceit and cankered malice rule thy throne.
Why did my arms in battle prosp'rous prove,
To gain the barren praise of filial love?
The best of kings by women is misled,
Charmed by the witchcraft of a second bed.
Against myself I victories have won,
And by my fatal absence am undone.

[*Enter*] *to him* INDAMORA, with ARIMANT

—But here she comes!
In the calm harbor of whose gentle breast,
My tempest-beaten soul may safely rest.
O my heart's joy! whate'er my sorrows be,
They cease and vanish in beholding thee!
Care shuns thy walks; as at the cheerful light,
The groaning ghosts and birds obscene take flight.
By this one view, all my past pains are paid,
And all I have to come, more easy made.

INDAMORA. Such sullen planets at my birth did shine,
They threaten every fortune mixed with mine.
Fly the pursuit of my disastrous love,
And from unhappy neighborhood remove!

AURENG-ZEBE. Bid the laborious hind,
Whose hardened hands did long in tillage toil,
Neglect the promised harvest of the soil.
Should I, who cultivated love with blood,
Refuse possession of approaching good?

INDAMORA. Love is an airy good, opinion makes;
Which he who only thinks he has, partakes:
Seen by a strong imagination's beam,
That tricks and dresses up the gaudy dream:
Presented so, with rapture 'tis enjoyed;
Raised by high fancy, and by low destroyed.

AURENG-ZEBE. If love be vision, mine has all the fire
Which, in first dreams, young prophets does inspire.
I dream, in you, our promised paradise—
An age's tumult of continued bliss.
But you have still your happiness in doubt;
Or else 'tis past, and you have dreamt it out.

INDAMORA. Perhaps not so.

AURENG-ZEBE. Can Indamora prove
So altered? Is it but *perhaps* you love?
Then farewell all! I thought in you to find,
A balm to cure my much distempered mind.
I came to grieve a father's heart estranged,
But little thought to find a mistress changed.
Nature herself is changed to punish me;
Virtue turned vice, and faith, inconstancy.

INDAMORA. You heard me not inconstancy confess;
'Twas but a friend's advice to love me less.
Who knows what adverse fortune may befall?
Arm well your mind! hope little and fear all.
Hope, with a goodly prospect, feeds your eye;
Shows, from a rising ground, possession nigh;
Shortens the distance, or o'erlooks it quite—
So easy 'tis to travel with the sight.

AURENG-ZEBE. Then to despair you would my love betray,
By taking Hope, its last kind friend, away.
You hold the glass, but turn the perspective,
And farther off the lessened object drive.
You bid me fear. In that your change I know;
You would prepare me for the coming blow.
But, to prevent you, take my last adieu;
I'll sadly tell myself you are untrue,
Rather than stay to hear it told by you.
(*Going*)

INDAMORA. Stay, Aureng-Zebe, I must not let you go—
And yet, believe yourself your own worst foe:
Think I am true, and seek no more to know.
Let in my breast the fatal secret lie;
'Tis a sad riddle which, if known, we die.
(*Seeming to pause*)

AURENG-ZEBE. Fair hypocrite, you seek to cheat in vain;
Your silence argues you ask time to feign.
Once more, farewell!—The snare in sight is laid;
'Tis my own fault if I am now betrayed.
(*Going again*)

INDAMORA. Yet once more stay! you shall believe me true,
Though in one fate I wrap myself and you.
Your absence—
ARIMANT. [*To* INDAMORA] Hold! you know the hard command
I must obey. You only can withstand
Your own mishap. I beg you, on my knee,
Be not unhappy by your own decree.
AURENG-ZEBE. Speak, madam; by (if that be yet an oath)
Your love, I'm pleased we should be ruined both.
"Both" is a sound of joy.
In Death's dark bowers our bridals we will keep,
And his cold hand
Shall draw the curtain when we go to sleep.
INDAMORA. Know then, that man whom both of us did trust,
Has been to you unkind, to me unjust.
The guardian of my faith so false did prove,
As to solicit me with lawless love;
Prayed, promised, threatened, all that man could do;
Base as he's great—and need I tell you who?
AURENG-ZEBE. Yes: for I'll not believe my father meant.
Speak quickly, and my impious thoughts prevent!
INDAMORA. You've said; I wish I could some other name!
ARIMANT. My duty must excuse me, sir, from blame.
—A guard there!

Enter Guards

AURENG-ZEBE. Slave, for me?
ARIMANT. My orders are
To seize this princess, whom the laws of war
Long since made prisoner.
AURENG-ZEBE. Villain!
ARIMANT. Sir, I know
Your birth, nor durst another call me so.
AURENG-ZEBE. I have redeemed her; and, as mine, she's free.
ARIMANT. You may have right to give her liberty,
But with your father, sir, that right dispute.
For his commands to me were absolute;
If she disclosed his love, to use the right
Of war, and to secure her from your sight.
AURENG-ZEBE. I'll rescue her, or die. (*Draws*) [*To his* Attendants]
And you, my friends, though few, are yet too brave,
To see your gen'ral's mistress made a slave. (*All draw*)
INDAMORA. Hold, my dear love! if so much power there lies,
As once you owned, in Indamora's eyes,
Lose not the honor you have early won,
But stand the blameless pattern of a son.
My love your claim inviolate secures;
'Tis writ in fate, I can be only yours.
My sufferings for you make your heart my due;
Be worthy me, as I am worthy you.
AURENG-ZEBE. (*Putting up his sword*)
I've thought, and blessed be you who gave me time;
My virtue was surprised into a crime.
Strong virtue, like strong nature, struggles still;
Exerts itself, and then throws off the ill.
I to a son's and lover's praise aspire,
And must fulfil the parts which both require.
How dear the cure of jealousy has cost!
With too much care and tenderness y'are lost.
So the fond youth from hell redeemed his prize,
Till looking back, she vanished from his eyes! *Exeunt severally*

ACT II

[*A court of the palace*]

Betwixt the acts a warlike tune is played; shooting of guns and shouts of soldiers are heard, as in an assault

[*Enter*] AURENG-ZEBE, ARIMANT, ASAPH KHAN, FAZEL KHAN, *and* SOLYMAN

AURENG-ZEBE. What man could do, was by Morat performed;

The fortress thrice himself in person stormed.
Your valor bravely did th'assault sustain,
And filled the moats and ditches with the slain;
Till, mad with rage, into the breach he fired,
Slew friends and foes, and in the smoke retired.

ARIMANT. To us you give what praises are not due;
Morat was thrice repulsed, but thrice by you.
High, over all, was your great conduct shown;
You sought our safety, but forgot your own.

ASAPH. Their standard planted on the battlement,
Despair and death among the soldiers sent.
You the bold omrah[1] tumbled from the wall,
And shouts of victory pursued his fall.

FAZEL. To you alone we owe this prosperous day,
Our wives and children rescued from the prey.
Know your own interest, sir; where'er you lead,
We jointly vow to own no other head.

SOLYMAN. Your wrongs are known. Impose but your commands,
This hour shall bring you twenty thousand hands.

AURENG-ZEBE. Let them who truly would appear my friends,
Employ their swords, like mine, for noble ends.
No more! Remember you have bravely done;
Shall treason end what loyalty begun?
I own no wrongs; some grievance I confess,
But kings, like gods, at their own time redress. (*Aside*)
Yet some becoming boldness I may use;
I've well deserved, nor will he now refuse.
I'll strike my fortunes with him at a heat,
And give him not the leisure to forget.

Exit [AURENG-ZEBE] *attended by the* Omrahs

ARIMANT. [*Alone*] O Indamora, hide these fatal eyes!
Too deep they wound whom they too soon surprise!
My virtue, prudence, honor, interest, all
Before this universal monarch fall.
Beauty, like ice, our footing does betray;
Who can tread sure on the smooth, slippery way?
Pleased with the passage, we slide swiftly on,
And see the dangers which we cannot shun.

[*Enter*] *to him* INDAMORA

INDAMORA. I hope my liberty may reach thus far;
These terrace walks within my limits are.
I came to seek you, and to let you know
How much I to your generous pity owe.
The king, when he designed you for my guard,
Resolved he would not make my bondage hard.
If otherwise, you have deceived his end,
And whom he meant a guardian, made a friend.

ARIMANT. A guardian's title I must own with shame,
But should be prouder of another name.

INDAMORA. And therefore 'twas I changed that name before;
I called you friend, and could you wish for more?

ARIMANT. I dare not ask for what you would not grant.
But wishes, madam, are extravagant;
They are not bounded with things possible.
I may wish more than I presume to tell.
Desire's the vast extent of human mind;
It mounts above, and leaves poor hope behind.
I could wish—

INDAMORA. What?

ARIMANT. Why did you speak? you've dashed my fancy quite,
Even in th'approaching minute of delight.
I must take breath,
Ere I the rapture of my wish renew,
And tell you then—it terminates in you.

INDAMORA. Have you considered what th'event would be?
Or know you, Arimant, yourself, or me?
Were I no queen, did you my beauty weigh,
My youth in bloom, your age in its decay?

[1] grandee.

ARIMANT. I, my own judge, condemned myself before;
For pity aggravate my crime no more!
So weak I am, I with a frown am slain;
You need have used but half so much disdain.
INDAMORA. I am not cruel yet to that degree;
Have better thoughts both of yourself and me.
Beauty a monarch is,
Which kingly power magnificently proves
By crowds of slaves, and peopled empire loves:
And such a slave as you, what queen would lose?
Above the rest, I Arimant would choose,
For counsel, valor, truth, and kindness too.
All I could wish in man, I find in you.
ARIMANT. What lover could to greater joy be raised?
I am, methinks, a god, by you thus praised.
INDAMORA. To what may not desert like yours pretend?
You have all qualities that fit a friend.
ARIMANT. So mariners mistake the promised coast,
And with full sails on the blind rocks are lost.
Think you my aged veins so faintly beat,
They rise no higher than to friendship's heat?
So weak your charms that, like a winter's night
Twinkling with stars, they freeze me while they light?
INDAMORA. Mistake me not, good Arimant; I know
My beauty's power, and what my charms can do.
You your own talent have not learned so well;
But practise one where you can ne'er excel.
You can, at most,
To an indiff'rent lover's praise pretend;
But you would spoil an admirable friend.
ARIMANT. Never was amity so highly prized,
Nor ever any love so much despised!
Even to myself ridiculous I grow,
And would be angry if I knew but how.
INDAMORA. Do not. Your anger, like your love, is vain;
Whene'er I please, you must be pleased again.
Knowing what pow'r I have your will to bend,
I'll use it, for I need just such a friend.
You must perform, not what you think is fit,
But to whatever I propose, submit.
ARIMANT. Madam, you have a strange ascendant gained;
You use me like a courser, spurred and reined.
If I fly out, my fierceness you command.
Then soothe and gently stroke me with your hand.
Impose! but use your power of taxing well;
When subjects cannot pay, they soon rebel.

Enter the EMPEROR, *unseen by them*

INDAMORA. My rebel's punishment would easy prove;
You know y'are in my power by making love.
ARIMANT. Would I, without dispute, your will obey,
And could you, in return, my life betray?
EMPEROR. What danger, Arimant, is this you fear?
Or what love-secret, which I must not hear?
(*To her*)
These altered looks some inward motion show:
His cheeks are pale, and yours with blushes glow.
INDAMORA. 'Tis what, with justice, may my anger move;
He has been bold and talked to me of love.
ARIMANT. (*Aside*) I am betrayed and shall be doomed to die.
EMPEROR. Did he, my slave, presume to look so high?
—That crawling insect, who from mud began,
Warmed by my beams, and kindled into man?
Durst he, who does but for my pleasure live,
Intrench on love, my great prerogative?

—Print his base image on his sovereign's coin?
'Tis treason if he stamp his love with mine.
ARIMANT. 'Tis true, I have been bold, but if it be
A crime—
INDAMORA. He means, 'tis only so to me.
You, sir, should praise, what I must disapprove.
He insolently talked to me of love;
But, sir, 'twas yours—he made it in your name.
You, if you please, may all he said disclaim.
EMPEROR. I must disclaim whate'er he can express;
His grovelling sense will show my passion less.
But stay!—if what he said my message be,
What fear, what danger, could arrive from me?
He said he feared you would his life betray.
INDAMORA. Should he presume again, perhaps I may.
Though in your hands he hazard not his life,
Remember, sir, your fury of a wife;
Who, not content to be revenged on you,
The agents of your passion will pursue.
EMPEROR. If I but hear her named, I'm sick that day;
The sound is mortal, and frights life away.
—Forgive me, Arimant, my jealous thought;
Distrust in lovers is the tenderest fault.
Leave me, and tell thyself, in my excuse,
Love, and a crown, no rivalship can bear;
And precious things are still possessed with fear. *Exit* ARIMANT, *bowing*
—This, madam, my excuse to you may plead;
Love should forgive the faults which love has made.
INDAMORA. From me what pardon can you hope to have,
Robbed of my love and treated as a slave?
EMPEROR. Force is the last relief which lovers find,
And 'tis the best excuse of womankind.
INDAMORA. Force never yet a generous heart did gain;
We yield on parley, but are stormed in vain.
Constraint, in all things, makes the pleasure less;
Sweet is the love which comes with willingness.
EMPEROR. No, 'tis resistance that inflames desire,
Sharpens the darts of love, and blows his fire.
Love is disarmed that meets with too much ease;
He languishes and does not care to please.
And therefore 'tis your golden fruit you guard
With so much care—to make possession hard.
INDAMORA. Was't not enough you took my crown away,
But cruelly you must my love betray?
I was well pleased to have transferred my right,
And better changed your claim of lawless might
By taking him whom you esteemed above
Your other sons, and taught me first to love.
EMPEROR. My son by my command his course must steer:
I bade him love, I bid him now forbear.
If you have any kindness for him still,
Advise him not to shock a father's will.
INDAMORA. Must I advise?
Then let me see him, and I'll try t'obey.
EMPEROR. I had forgot, and dare not trust your way.
But send him word;
He has not here an army to command.
Remember, he and you are in my hand.
INDAMORA. Yes, in a father's hand, whom he has served,
And, with the hazard of his life, preserved.
But piety to you, unhappy prince,
Becomes a crime, and duty an offence;
Against yourself you with your foes combine,
And seem your own destruction to design.
EMPEROR. You may be pleased your politics to spare;
I'm old enough, and can myself take care.
INDAMORA. Advice from me was, I confess, too bold:
Y'are old enough—it may be, sir, too old.

EMPEROR. You please yourself with your contempt of age;
But love, neglected, will convert to rage.
If on your head my fury does not turn,
Thank that fond dotage which so much you scorn.
But in another's person you may prove,
There's warmth for vengeance left, though not for love.

Re-enter ARIMANT

ARIMANT. The empress has the antechambers passed,
And this way moves with a disordered haste.
Her brows the stormy marks of anger bear.
EMPEROR. Madam, retire; she must not find you here.
Exit INDAMORA *with* ARIMANT

Enter NOURMAHAL, *hastily*

NOURMAHAL. What have I done, that Nourmahal must prove
The scorn and triumph of a rival's love?
My eyes are still the same; each glance, each grace,
Keep their first lustre, and maintain their place—
Not second yet to any other face.
EMPEROR. What rage transports you? Are you well awake?
Such dreams distracted minds in fevers make.
NOURMAHAL. Those fevers you have given, those dreams have bred,
By broken faith, and an abandoned bed.
Such visions hourly pass before my sight,
Which from my eyes their balmy slumbers fright,
In the severest silence of the night;
Visions, which in this citadel are seen—
Bright glorious visions of a rival queen.
EMPEROR. Have patience!—my first flames can ne'er decay;
These are but dreams and soon will pass away.
Thou know'st, my heart, my empire—all is thine.
In thy own heaven of love serenely shine—
Fair as the face of Nature did appear
When flowers first peeped, and trees did blossoms bear,
And winter had not yet deformed the inverted year;
Calm as the breath which fans our eastern groves,
And bright as when thy eyes first lighted up our loves.
Let our eternal peace be sealed by this,
With the first ardor of a nuptial kiss.
(*Offers to kiss her*)
NOURMAHAL. Me would you have—me your faint kisses prove,
The dregs and droppings of enervate love?
Must I your cold, long-laboring age sustain,
And be to empty joys provoked in vain?
Receive you, sighing after other charms,
And take an absent husband in my arms?
EMPEROR. Even these reproaches I can bear from you;
You doubted of my love, believe it true.
Nothing but love this patience could produce,
And I allow your rage that kind excuse.
NOURMAHAL. Call it not patience; 'tis your guilt stands mute.
You have a cause too foul to bear dispute.
You wrong me first, and urge my rage to rise.
Then I must pass for mad—you, meek and wise.
Good man! plead merit by your soft replies.
Vain privilege poor women have of tongue;
Men can stand silent and resolve on wrong.
EMPEROR. What can I more? my friendship you refuse,
And even my mildness, as my crime, accuse.
NOURMAHAL. Your sullen silence cheats not me, false man;
I know you think the bloodiest things you can.
Could you accuse me, you would raise your voice,
Watch for my crimes, and in my guilt rejoice.
But my known virtue is from scandal free,
And leaves no shadow for your calumny.
EMPEROR. Such virtue is the plague of human life—
A virtuous woman, but a cursèd wife.

In vain of pompous chastity y'are proud;
Virtue's adultery of the tongue, when loud.
I with less pain a prostitute could bear
Than the shrill sound of "virtue! virtue!" hear.
In unchaste wives
There's yet a kind of recompensing ease;
Vice keeps 'em humble, gives 'em care to please.
But against clamorous virtue, what defence?
It stops our mouths and gives your noise pretence.
NOURMAHAL. Since virtue does your indignation raise,
'Tis pity but you had that wife you praise.
Your own wild appetites are prone to range,
And then you tax our humors with your change.
EMPEROR. What can be sweeter than our native home?
Thither for ease and soft repose we come.
Home is the sacred refuge of our life;
Secured from all approaches—but a wife.
If thence we fly, the cause admits no doubt;
None but an inmate foe could force us out.
Clamors our privacies uneasy make;
Birds leave their nest disturbed, and beasts their haunts forsake.
NOURMAHAL. Honor's my crime that has your loathing bred;
You take no pleasure in a virtuous bed.
EMPEROR. What pleasure can there be in that estate
Which your unquietness has made me hate?
I shrink far off,
Dissembling sleep, but wakeful with the fright;
The day takes off the pleasure of the night.
NOURMAHAL. My thoughts no other joys but pow'r pursue;
Or, if they did, they must be lost in you.
And yet the fault's not mine,
Though youth and beauty cannot warmth command!
The sun in vain shines on the barren sand.
EMPEROR. 'Tis true, of marriage-bands I'm weary grown;
Love scorns all ties but those that are his own.
Chains that are dragged, must needs uneasy prove,
For there's a godlike liberty in love.
NOURMAHAL. What's love to you?
The bloom of beauty other years demands,
Nor will be gathered by such withered hands.
You importune it with a false desire,
Which sparkles out, and makes no solid fire.
This impudence of age, whence can it spring?
All you expect, and yet you nothing bring;
Eager to ask when you are past a grant,
Nice in providing what you cannot want.
Have conscience! give not her you love this pain;
Solicit not yourself and her in vain.
All other debts may compensation find;
But love is strict, and will be paid in kind.
EMPEROR. Sure, of all ills, domestic are the worst;
When most secure of blessing, we are cursed.
When we lay next us what we hold most dear,
Like Hercules envenomed shirts we wear
And cleaving mischiefs.
NOURMAHAL. What you merit, have;
And share, at least, the miseries you gave.
Your days I will alarm, I'll haunt your nights,
And, worse than age, disable your delights.
May your sick fame still languish till it die;
All offices of pow'r neglected lie,
And you grow cheap in every subject's eye!
Then, as the greatest curse that I can give,
Unpitied be deposed—and, after, live!
(*Going off*)
EMPEROR. Stay, and now learn
How criminal soe'er we husbands are,
'Tis not for wives to push our crimes too far.
Had you still mistress of your temper been,
I had been modest and not owned my sin.
Your fury hardens me! and whate'er wrong
You suffer, you have cancelled by your tongue.
—A guard there!
[*Enter* Guard]
—Seize her! she shall know this hour,
What is a husband's and a monarch's pow'r.
(Guard *seizes her*)

Enter AURENG-ZEBE

NOURMAHAL. I see for whom your charter you maintain;
I must be fettered, and my son be slain,
That Zelyma's ambitious race may reign.
Not so you promised when my beauty drew
All Asia's vows; when, Persia left for you,
The realm of Candahar for dower I brought—
That long-contended prize for which you fought.

AURENG-ZEBE. The name of stepmother, your practised art,
By which you have estranged my father's heart—
All you have done against me, or design,
Shows your aversion, but begets not mine.
Long may my father India's empire guide,
And may no breach your nuptial vows divide!

EMPEROR. Since love obliges not, I from this hour
Assume the right of man's despotic power.
Man is by nature formed your sex's head,
And is himself the canon of his bed.
In bands of iron fettered you shall be—
An easier yoke than what you put on me.

AURENG-ZEBE. Though much I fear my int'rest is not great,
Let me your royal clemency intreat.
(*Kneeling*)
Secrets of marriage still are sacred held;
Their sweet and bitter by the wise concealed.
Errors of wives reflect on husbands still,
And when divulged proclaim you've chosen ill;
And the mysterious pow'r of bed and throne
Should always be maintained, but rarely shown.

EMPEROR. To so perverse a sex all grace is vain;
It gives them courage to offend again.
For with feigned tears they penitence pretend,
Again are pardoned, and again offend;
Fathom our pity when they seem to grieve,
Only to try how far we can forgive;
Till, launching out into a sea of strife,
They scorn all pardon and appear all wife.
—But be it as you please! for your loved sake,
This last and fruitless trial I will make;
In all requests your right of merit use,
And know, there is but one I can refuse.
(*He signs to the* Guards, *and they remove from the* Empress)

NOURMAHAL. You've done enough, for you designed my chains;
The grace is vanished, but th'affront remains.
Nor is't a grace, or for his merit done;
You durst no farther, for you feared my son.
This you have gained by the rough course you prove:
I'm past repentance, and you, past my love.
Exit

EMPEROR. A spirit so untamed the world ne'er bore!

AURENG-ZEBE. And yet worse usage had incensed her more.
But since by no obligement she is tied,
You must betimes for your defence provide.
I cannot idle in your danger stand,
But beg once more I may your arms command.
Two battles your auspicious cause has won;
My sword can perfect what it has begun,
And from your walls dislodge that haughty son.

EMPEROR. My son, your valor has this day been such,
None can enough admire, or praise too much:
But now, with reason, your success I doubt;
Her faction's strong within, his arms without.

AURENG-ZEBE. I left the city in a panic fright;
Lions they are in council, lambs in fight.
But my own troops, by Mirza led, are near;
I, by to-morrow's dawn, expect 'em here.
To favor 'em, I'll sally out ere day,
And through our slaughtered foes enlarge their way.

EMPEROR. Age has not yet
So shrunk my sinews, or so chilled my veins,
But conscious virtue in my breast remains.
But had I now

That strength with which my boiling youth was fraught,
When in the vale of Balasor I fought,
And from Bengal their captive monarch brought;
When elephant 'gainst elephant did rear
His trunk, and castles justled in the air;
My sword thy way to victory had shown,
And owed the conquest to itself alone.

AURENG-ZEBE. Those fair ideas to my aid I'll call,
And emulate my great original;
Or, if they fail, I will invoke, in arms,
The pow'r of love, and Indamora's charms.

EMPEROR. I doubt the happy influence of your star;
To invoke a captive's name bodes ill in war.

AURENG-ZEBE. Sir, give me leave to say, whatever now
The omen prove, it boded well to you.
Your royal promise, when I went to fight,
Obliged me to resign a victor's right.
Her liberty I fought for, and I won,
And claim it, as your general and your son.

EMPEROR. My ears still ring with noise; I'm vexed to death!
Tongue-killed, and have not yet recovered breath;
Nor will I be prescribed my time by you.
First end the war, and then your claim renew.
While to your conduct I my fortune trust,
To keep this pledge of duty is but just.

AURENG-ZEBE. Some hidden cause your jealousy does move,
Or you could ne'er suspect my loyal love.

EMPEROR. What love soever by an heir is shown,
He waits but time to step into the throne.
You're neither justified, nor yet accused;
Meanwhile, the prisoner with respect is used.

AURENG-ZEBE. I know the kindness of her guardian such,
I need not fear too little, but too much.
But how, sir, how have you from virtue swerved?
Or what so ill return have I deserved?
You doubt not me, nor have I spent my blood
To have my faith no better understood.
Your soul's above the baseness of distrust;
Nothing but love could make you so unjust.

EMPEROR. You know your rival, then, and know 'tis fit
The son should to the father's claim submit.

AURENG-ZEBE. Sons may have rights which they can never quit.
Yourself first made that title which I claim—
First bade me love, and authorized my flame.

EMPEROR. The value of my gift I did not know.
If I could give, I can resume it too.

AURENG-ZEBE. Recall your gift, for I your pow'r confess,
But first take back my life, a gift that's less.
Long life would now but a long burthen prove:
You're grown unkind, and I have lost your love.
—My grief lets unbecoming speeches fall;
I should have died and not complained at all.

EMPEROR. Witness, ye powers,
How much I suffered, and how long I strove
Against th'assaults of this imperious love!
I represented to myself the shame
Of perjured faith and violated fame.
Your great deserts, how ill they were repaid!
All arguments, in vain, I urged and weighed;
For mighty Love, who prudence does despise,
For reason showed me Indamora's eyes.
What would you more? my crime I sadly view,
Acknowledge, am ashamed, and yet pursue.

AURENG-ZEBE. Since you can love and yet your error see,
The same resistless pow'r may plead for me.
With no less ardor I my claim pursue;
I love and cannot yield her even to you.

EMPEROR. Your elder brothers, though o'ercome, have right:
The youngest, yet in arms, prepared to fight.
But, yielding her, I firmly have decreed,
That you alone to empire shall succeed.

AURENG-ZEBE. To after-ages let me stand a shame,
When I exchange for crowns my love or fame!

You might have found a mercenary son,
To profit of the battles he had won.
Had I been such, what hindered me to take
The crown? nor had th'exchange been yours to make.
While you are living, I no right pretend;
Wear it, and let it where you please descend.
But from my love, 'tis sacrilege to part;
There, there's my throne—in Indamora's heart.

EMPEROR. 'Tis in her heart alone that you must reign;
You'll find her person difficult to gain.
Give willingly what I can take by force,
And know, obedience is your safest course.

AURENG-ZEBE. I'm taught, by honor's precepts, to obey:
Fear to obedience is a slavish way.
If aught my want of duty could beget,
You take the most prevailing means—to threat.
Pardon your blood, that boils within my veins;
It rises high, and menacing disdains.
Even Death's become to me no dreadful name;
I've often met him, and have made him tame.
In fighting fields, where our acquaintance grew,
I saw him, and contemned him first for you.

EMPEROR. Of formal duty make no more thy boast!
Thou disobey'st where it concerns me most.
Fool! with both hands thus to push back a crown,
And headlong cast thyself from empire down!
Though Nourmahal I hate, her son shall reign;
Inglorious, thou, by thy own fault remain!
Thy younger brother I'll admit this hour;
So mine shall be thy mistress, his thy power.

Exit

AURENG-ZEBE. How vain is virtue, which directs our ways
Through certain danger to uncertain praise!
Barren and airy name! thee Fortune flies,
With thy lean train, the pious and the wise.
Heav'n takes thee at thy word, without regard,
And lets thee poorly be thy own reward.
The world is made for the bold, impious man
Who stops at nothing, seizes all he can.
Justice to merit does weak aid afford;
She trusts her balance, and neglects her sword.
Virtue is nice to take[1] what's not her own,
And, while she long consults, the prize is gone.

[*Enter*] *to him* DIANET

DIANET. Forgive the bearer of unhappy news!
Your altered father openly pursues
Your ruin; and, to compass his intent,
For violent Morat in haste has sent.
The gates he ordered all to be unbarred,
And from the market-place to draw the guard.

AURENG-ZEBE. How look the people in this turn of state?

DIANET. They mourn your ruin as their proper fate;
Cursing the empress, for they think it done
By her procurement, to advance her son.
Him too, though awed, they scarcely can forbear;
His pride they hate, his violence they fear.
All bent to rise, would you appear their chief
Till your own troops come up to your relief!

AURENG-ZEBE. Ill treated and forsaken as I am,
I'll not betray the glory of my name.
'Tis not for me, who have preserved a state,
To buy an empire at so base a rate.

DIANET. The points of honor poets may produce—
Trappings of life, for ornament, not use.
Honor, which only does the name advance,
Is the mere raving madness of romance.
Pleased with a word, you may sit tamely down,
And see your younger brother force the crown.

[1] scrupulous about taking.

AURENG-ZEBE. I know my fortune in extremes does lie
—The sons of Indostan must reign, or die.
That desperate hazard courage does create,
As he plays frankly who has least estate;
And that the world the coward will despise,
When life's a blank, who pulls not for a prize.
DIANET. Of all your knowledge, this vain fruit you have,
To walk with eyes broad open to your grave.
AURENG-ZEBE. From what I've said, conclude, without reply,
I neither would usurp, nor tamely die.
The attempt to fly would guilt betray, or fear:
Besides, 'twere vain—the fort's our prison here.
Somewhat I have resolved—
Morat, perhaps, has honor in his breast;
And, in extremes, both counsels are the best.
Like emp'ric remedies, they last are tried,
And by th'event condemned, or justified.
Presence of mind, and courage in distress,
Are more than armies to procure success.

Exeunt

ACT III

[*A court of the palace*]

[*Enter*] ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand*, [*and*] INDAMORA

ARIMANT. —And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue;
You lay commands, both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival and betray my trust.
INDAMORA. You first betrayed your trust, in loving me,
And should not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind:
'Tis in your nature and your noble mind.
ARIMANT. I'll to the king, and straight my trust resign.
INDAMORA. His trust you may, but you shall never mine.
Heav'n made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confidant and friend.
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write.
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind;
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.
ARIMANT. (*Reading*) *I ask not Heav'n my freedom to restore,*
But only for your sake—I'll read no more!
And yet I must— (*Reading*)
Less for my own, than for your sorrows sad—
Another line like this would make me mad—
(*As though reading*)
Heav'n! she goes on—yet more—and yet more kind!
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind. (*Reading*)
"See me this night—
Thank Fortune, who did such a friend provide,
For faithful Arimant shall be your guide."
—Not only to be made an instrument,
But pre-engaged without my own consent!
INDAMORA. Unknown t'engage you, still augments my score,
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
ARIMANT. The best of men
Some interest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess.
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like Bellerophon,[1] my own sentence bear.
INDAMORA. You may, but 'twill not be your best advice.
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late;
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
ARIMANT. I thank thee, Heav'n; thou hast been wondrous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery designed,
And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind?

[1] Who unwittingly bore the order for his own murder.

Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute—
(*She frowns*)
You frown, and I obey with speed before
That dreadful sentence comes, "See me no more!"
See me no more! that sound, methinks, I hear
Like the last trumpet thund'ring in my ear.

Enter SOLYMAN

SOLYMAN. The princess Melesinda, bathed in tears,
And tossed alternately with hopes and fears,
If your affairs such leisure can afford,
Would learn from you the fortunes of her lord.

ARIMANT. Tell her that I some certainty may bring;
I go this minute to attend the king.

INDAMORA. This lonely turtle I desire to see.
Grief, though not cured, is eased by company.

ARIMANT. (*To* SOLYMAN) Say, if she please, she hither may repair,
And breathe the freshness of the open air.
Exit SOLYMAN

INDAMORA. Poor princess! how I pity her estate,
Wrapped in the ruins of her husband's fate!
She mourned Morat should in rebellion rise;
Yet he offends, and she's the sacrifice.

ARIMANT. Not knowing his design, at court she stayed
Till, by command, close pris'ner she was made.
Since when,
Her chains with Roman constancy she bore,
But that, perhaps, an Indian wife's is more.

INDAMORA. Go, bring her comfort; leave me here alone.

ARIMANT. My love must still be in obedience shown. *Exit* ARIMANT

Enter MELESINDA *led by* SOLYMAN, *who retires afterwards*

INDAMORA. When graceful Sorrow in her pomp appears,
Sure, she is dressed in Melesinda's tears.
Your head reclined (as hiding grief from view),
Droops, like a rose, surcharged with morning dew.

MELESINDA. Can flow'rs but droop in absence of the sun,
Which waked their sweets?—and mine, alas! is gone.
But you the noblest charity express;
For they who shine in courts, still shun distress.

INDAMORA. Distressed myself, like you, confined I live,
And, therefore, can compassion take and give.
We're both Love's captives, but with fate so cross,
One must be happy by the other's loss.
Morat or Aureng-Zebe must fall this day.

MELESINDA. Too truly Tamerlane's successors they;
Each thinks a world too little for his sway.
Could you and I the same pretences bring,
Mankind should with more ease receive a king.
I would to you the narrow world resign,
And want no empire while Morat was mine.

INDAMORA. Wished freedom, I presage, you soon will find
If Heav'n be just, and be to virtue kind.

MELESINDA. Quite otherwise my mind foretells my fate;
Short is my life, and that unfortunate.
Yet should I not complain, would Heav'n afford
Some little time, ere death, to see my lord.

INDAMORA. These thoughts are but your melancholy's food,
Raised from a lonely life and dark abode.
But whatsoe'er our jarring fortunes prove,
Though our lords hate, methinks we two may love.

MELESINDA. Such be our loves as may not yield to fate;
I bring a heart more true than fortunate.
(*Giving their hands*)

[*Enter*] *to them* ARIMANT

ARIMANT. I come with haste, surprising news to bring:
In two hours' time, since last I saw the king,
The affairs of court have wholly changed their face.
Unhappy Aureng-Zebe is in disgrace,
And your Morat, proclaimed the successor,
Is called to awe the city with his pow'r.
Those trumpets his triumphant entry tell,
And now the shouts waft near the citadel.
INDAMORA. See, madam, see th'event by me foreshown!
I envy not your chance, but grieve my own.
MELESINDA. A change so unexpected must surprise—
And more, because I am unused to joys.
INDAMORA. May all your wishes ever prosp'rous be!
But I'm too much concerned th'event to see.
My eyes too tender are—
To view my lord become the public scorn.
I came to comfort, and I go to mourn.
(*Taking her leave*)
MELESINDA. Stay, I'll not see my lord
Before I give your sorrow some relief,
And pay the charity you lent my grief.
Here he shall see me first, with you confined;
And, if your virtue fail to move his mind,
I'll use my int'rest that he may be kind.
Fear not, I never moved him yet in vain.
INDAMORA. So fair a pleader any cause may gain.
MELESINDA. I have no taste, methinks, of coming joy;
For black presages all my hopes destroy.
"Die!" something whispers.—"Melesinda, die!
Fulfil, fulfil, thy mournful destiny!"
Mine is a gleam of bliss, too hot to last;
Wat'ry it shines, and will be soon o'ercast.
INDAMORA *and* MELESINDA *retire*[1] *as into the chamber*
ARIMANT. Fortune seems weary grown of Aureng-Zebe,
While to her new-made favorite, Morat,
Her lavish hand is wastefully profuse—
With fame and flowing honors tided in,
Borne on a swelling current smooth beneath him.
The king and haughty empress, to our wonder,
If not atoned, yet seemingly at peace,
As fate for him that miracle reserved.
[*Exit* ARIMANT]

Enter in triumph, EMPEROR, MORAT, *and* Train

EMPEROR. [*To* MORAT] I have confessed I love.
As I interpret fairly your design,
So look not with severer eyes on mine.
Your fate has called you to th'imperial seat:
In duty be, as you in arms are, great.
For Aureng-Zebe a hated name is grown,
And love less bears a rival than the throne.
MORAT. To me, the cries of fighting fields are charms;
Keen be my sabre, and of proof my arms.
I ask no other blessing of my stars,
No prize but fame, nor mistress but the wars.
I scarce am pleased I tamely mount the throne—
Would Aureng-Zebe had all their souls in one!
With all my elder brothers I would fight,
And so from partial nature force my right.
EMPEROR. Had we but lasting youth, and time to spare,
Some might be thrown away on fame and war.
But youth, the perishing good, runs on too fast,
And unenjoyed will spend itself to waste.
Few know the use of life before 'tis past.
Had I once more thy vigor to command,
I would not let it die upon my hand.
No hour of pleasure should pass empty by;
Youth should watch joys, and shoot 'em as they fly.
MORAT. Methinks, all pleasure is in greatness found.
Kings, like heav'n's eye, should spread their beams around,

[1] *re-enter.*

Pleased to be seen while glory's race they run.
Rest is not for the chariot of the sun.
Subjects are stiff-necked animals; they soon
Feel slackened reins, and pitch their rider down.
EMPEROR. To thee that drudgery of pow'r I give:
Cares be thy lot! Reign thou, and let me live.
The fort I'll keep for my security;
Business and public state, resign to thee.
MORAT. Luxurious kings are to their people lost:
They live, like drones, upon the public cost.
My arms from pole to pole the world shall shake,
And, with myself, keep all mankind awake!
EMPEROR. Believe me, son, and needless trouble spare;
'Tis a base world, and is not worth our care.
The vulgar, a scarce animated clod,
Ne'er pleased with aught [above them], prince or God.
Were I a god, the drunken globe should roll,
The little emmets[1] with the human soul
Care for themselves, while at my ease I sat,
And second causes did the work of fate.
Or, if I would take care, that care should be
For wit that scorned the world and lived like me.

[*Enter*] *to them* NOURMAHAL, ZAYDA, *and* Attendants

NOURMAHAL. (*Embracing her son*) My dear Morat,
This day propitious to us all has been:
You're now a monarch's heir, and I a queen.
Your youthful father now may quit the state,
And find the ease he sought, indulged by fate.
Cares shall not keep him on the throne awake,
Nor break the golden slumbers he would take.

EMPEROR. In vain I struggled to the goal of life,
While rebel sons and an imperious wife
Still dragged me backward into noise and strife.
MORAT. Be that remembrance lost; and be't my pride
To be your pledge of peace on either side.

[*Enter*] *to them* AURENG-ZEBE

AURENG-ZEBE. With all th'assurance innocence can bring,
Fearless without, because secure within,
Armed with my courage, unconcerned I see
This pomp—a shame to you, a pride to me.
Shame is but where with wickedness 'tis joined;
And, while no baseness in this breast I find,
I have not lost the birthright of my mind.
EMPEROR. Children (the blind effect of love and chance,
Formed by their sportive parents' ignorance)
Bear from their birth th'impressions of a slave
Whom Heav'n for play-games first, and then for service gave.
One then may be displaced, and one may reign,
And want of merit render birthright vain.
MORAT. Comes he t'upbraid us with his innocence?
Seize him, and take the preaching Brahman hence!
AURENG-ZEBE. (*To his father*) Stay, sir!
—I from my years no merit plead:
All my designs and acts to duty lead.
Your life and glory are my only end,
And for that prize I with Morat contend.
MORAT. Not him alone! I all mankind defy.
Who dares adventure more for both than I?
AURENG-ZEBE. I know you brave, and take you at your word:
That present service, which you vaunt, afford.
Our two rebellious brothers are not dead;
Though vanquished, yet again they gather head.

[1] ants.

I dare you, as your rival in renown:
March out your army from th'imperial town;
Choose whom you please, the other leave to me;
And set our father absolutely free.
This, if you do, to end all future strife,
I am content to lead a private life—
Disband my army to secure the state,
Nor aim at more, but leave the rest to fate.
MORAT. I'll do't.—Draw out my army on the plain.
War is to me a pastime, peace a pain.
EMPEROR. (*To* MORAT) Think better first.— (*To* AURENG-ZEBE)
You see yourself inclosed beyond escape,
And, therefore, Proteus-like, you change your shape.
Of promise prodigal, while pow'r you want,
And preaching in the self-denying cant.
MORAT. Plot better; for these arts too obvious are,
Of gaining time, the master-piece of war.
Is Aureng-Zebe so known?
AURENG-ZEBE. If acts like mine,
So far from int'rest, profit, or design,
Can show my heart, by those I would be known:
I wish you could as well defend your own.
My absent army for my father fought:
Yours, in these walls, is to enslave him brought.
If I come singly, you an armèd guest,
The world with ease may judge whose cause is best.
MORAT. My father saw you ill designs pursue,
And my admission showed his fear of you.
AURENG-ZEBE. Himself best knows why he his love withdraws!
I owe him more than to declare the cause.
But still I press, our duty may be shown
By arms.
MORAT. I'll vanquish all his foes alone.
AURENG-ZEBE. You speak as if you could the fates command,
And had no need of any other hand.
But since my honor you so far suspect,
'Tis just I should on your designs reflect.
To prove yourself a loyal son, declare
You'll lay down arms when you conclude the war.
MORAT. No present answer your demand requires;
The war once done, I'll do what Heav'n inspires.
And while this sword this monarchy secures,
'Tis managed by an abler arm than yours.
EMPEROR. (*Aside*) Morat's design a doubtful meaning bears:
In Aureng-Zebe true loyalty appears.
He, for my safety, does his own despise;
Still, with his wrongs, I find his duty rise.
I feel my virtue struggling in my soul,
But stronger passion does its power control.—
(*To* AURENG-ZEBE, *aside*)
Yet be advised your ruin to prevent;
You might be safe, if you would give consent.
AURENG-ZEBE. So to your welfare I of use may be,
My life or death are equal both to me.
EMPEROR. The people's hearts are yours; the fort yet mine.
Be wise, and Indamora's love resign.
I am observed.—Remember that I give
This my last proof of kindness—die or live.
AURENG-ZEBE. Life, with my Indamora, I would choose;
But losing her, the end of living lose.
I had considered all I ought before,
And fear of death can make me change no more.
The people's love so little I esteem,
Condemned by you, I would not live by them.
May he who must, your favor now possess,
Much better serve you, and not love you less.
EMPEROR. (*Aloud*) I've heard you; and, to finish the debate,
Commit that rebel pris'ner to the state!
MORAT. The deadly draught he shall begin this day,
And languish with insensible decay.
AURENG-ZEBE. I hate the ling'ring summons to attend;
Death all at once would be the nobler end.

Fate is unkind! Methinks a general
Should warm, and at the head of armies fall;
(*To his father*)
And my ambition did that hope pursue,
That so I might have died in fight for you.
MORAT. Would I had been disposer of thy stars!
Thou shouldst have had thy wish, and died in wars.
'Tis I, not thou, have reason to repine,
That thou shouldst fall by any hand but mine.
AURENG-ZEBE. When thou wert formed, Heav'n did a man begin;
But the brute soul, by chance, was shuffled in.
In woods and wilds thy monarchy maintain,
Where valiant beasts, by force and rapine, reign.
In life's next scene, if transmigration be,
Some bear, or lion, is reserved for thee.
MORAT. Take heed thou com'st not in that lion's way!
I prophesy, thou wilt thy soul convey
Into a lamb, and be again my prey.
—Hence with that dreaming priest!
NOURMAHAL. Let me prepare
The poisonous draught: his death shall be my care.
Near my apartment let him pris'ner be,
That I his hourly ebbs of life may see.
AURENG-ZEBE. My life I would not ransom with a pray'r:
'Tis vile, since 'tis not worth my father's care.
I go not, sir, indebted to my grave;
You paid yourself, and took the life you gave. *Exit* [AURENG-ZEBE]
EMPEROR. (*Aside*) Oh, that I had more sense of virtue left,
Or were of that which yet remains, bereft!
I've just enough to know how I offend,
And, to my shame, have not enough to mend.
—Lead to the mosque!
MORAT. Love's pleasures, why should dull devotion stay?
Heav'n to my Melesinda's but the way.
Exeunt EMPEROR, MORAT, *and* Train
ZAYDA. Sure, Aureng-Zebe has somewhat of divine,
Whose virtue through so dark a cloud can shine!
Fortune has from Morat this day removed
The greatest rival and the best beloved.
NOURMAHAL. He is not yet removed.
ZAYDA. He lives, 'tis true;
But soon must die, and—what I mourn, by you.
NOURMAHAL. (*Embracing her eagerly*) My Zayda, may thy words prophetic be!
I take the omen; let him die by me!
He, stifled in my arms, shall lose his breath;
And life itself shall envious be of death.
ZAYDA. Bless me, you powers above!
NOURMAHAL. Why dost thou start?
Is love so strange? Or have not I a heart?
Could Aureng-Zebe so lovely seem to thee,
And I want eyes that noble worth to see?
Thy little soul was but to wonder moved:
My sense of it was higher, and I loved.
That man, that god-like man, so brave, so great—
But these are thy small praises I repeat.
I'm carried by a tide of love away:
He's somewhat more than I myself can say.
ZAYDA. Though all th'ideas you can form be true,
He must not, cannot, be possessed by you!
If contradicting int'rests could be mixed,
Nature herself has cast a bar betwixt;
And, ere you reach to this incestuous love,
You must divine and human rights remove.
NOURMAHAL. Count this among the wonders love has done—
I had forgot he was my husband's son.
ZAYDA. Nay, more, you have forgot who is your own,
For whom your care so long designed the throne.
Morat must fall if Aureng-Zebe should rise.
NOURMAHAL. 'Tis true; but who was e'er in love, and wise?
Why was that fatal knot of marriage tied,
Which did, by making us too near, divide?
Divides me from my sex!—for Heav'n, I find,
Excludes but me alone of womankind.
I stand with guilt confounded, lost with shame,
And yet made wretched only by a name.

If names have such command on human life,
Love sure's a name that's more divine than wife.
That sovereign pow'r all guilt from action takes;
At least the stains are beautiful it makes.
ZAYDA. Th'encroaching ill you early should oppose:
Flattered, 'tis worse, and by indulgence grows.
NOURMAHAL. Alas! and what have I not said or done?
I fought it to the last—and love has won
A bloody conquest, which destruction brought,
And ruined all the country where he fought.
Whether this passion from above was sent,
The fate of him Heav'n favors to prevent;
Or as the curse of fortune in excess,
That, stretching, would beyond its reach possess,
And, with a taste which plenty does deprave,
Loathes lawful good, and lawless ill does crave—
ZAYDA. But yet, consider—
NOURMAHAL. No, 'tis loss of time!
Think how to further, not divert my crime.
My artful engines instantly I'll move,
And choose the soft and gentlest hour of love.
The under-provost of the fort is mine.
—But see, Morat! I'll whisper my design.

Enter MORAT *with* ARIMANT, *as talking*, [*with*] Attendants

ARIMANT. [*Aloud*] And for that cause was not in public seen,
But stays in prison with the captive queen.
MORAT. Let my attendants wait; I'll be alone.
Where least of state, there most of love is shown.
[*Exeunt* ARIMANT *and* Attendants]
NOURMAHAL. (*To* MORAT) My son, your bus'ness is not hard to guess;
Long absence makes you eager to possess.
I will not importune you by my stay;
She merits all the love which you can pay.
Exit [NOURMAHAL] *with* ZAYDA

Re-enter ARIMANT, *with* MELESINDA, *then exit*. MORAT *runs to* MELESINDA, *and embraces her*

MORAT. Should I not chide you, that you chose to stay
In gloomy shades, and lost a glorious day—
Lost the firstfruits of joy you should possess
In my return, and made my triumph less?
MELESINDA. Should I not chide, that you could stay and see
Those joys, preferring public pomp to me?
Through my dark cell your shouts of triumph rung:
I heard with pleasure, but I thought 'em long.
MORAT. The public will in triumphs rudely share,
And kings the rudeness of their joys must bear.
But I made haste to set my captive free.
And thought that work was only worthy me.
The fame of ancient matrons you pursue,
And stand a blameless pattern to the new.
I have not words to praise such acts as these—
But take my heart, and mould it as you please.
MELESINDA. A trial of your kindness I must make,
Though not for mine so much as virtue's sake.
The queen of Cassimere—
MORAT. No more, my love!
That only suit I beg you not to move.
That she's in bonds for Aureng-Zebe I know,
And should, by my consent, continue so;
The good old man, I fear, will pity show.
My father dotes, and let him still dote on;
He buys his mistress dearly, with his throne.
MELESINDA. See her, and then be cruel if you can.
MORAT. 'Tis not with me as with a private man;
Such may be swayed by honor or by love,
But monarchs only by their int'rest move.
MELESINDA. Heav'n does a tribute for your pow'r demand.
He leaves th'oppressed and poor upon your hand.

And those who stewards of his pity prove,
He blesses in return with public love.
In his distress some miracle is shown;
If exiled, Heav'n restores him to his throne.
He needs no guard while any subject's near,
Nor, like his tyrant neighbors, lives in fear.
No plots the alarm to his retirement give;
'Tis all mankind's concern that he should live.

MORAT. You promised friendship in your low estate,
And should forget it in your better fate.
Such maxims are more plausible than true,
But somewhat must be given to love and you.
I'll view this captive queen, to let her see
Prayers and complaints are lost on such as me.

MELESINDA. I'll bear the news. Heav'n knows how much I'm pleased,
That by my care th'afflicted may be eased!

As she is going off, enter INDAMORA

INDAMORA. I'll spare your pains, and venture out alone,
Since you, fair princess, my protection own.
(*To* MORAT, *kneeling, who takes her up*)
But you, brave prince, a harder task must find;
In saving me, you would but half be kind.
An humble suppliant at your feet I lie;
You have condemned my better part to die.
Without my Aureng-Zebe I cannot live;
Revoke his doom, or else my sentence give!

MELESINDA. If Melesinda in your love have part—
Which, to suspect, would break my tender heart—
If love like mine may for a lover plead,
By the chaste pleasures of our nuptial bed,
By all the int'rest my past sufferings make,
And all I yet would suffer for your sake;
By you yourself, the last and dearest tie—

MORAT. You move in vain, for Aureng-Zebe must die.

INDAMORA. Could that decree from any brother come?
Nature herself is sentenced in your doom.
Piety is no more; she sees her place
Usurped by monsters and a savage race.
From her soft eastern climes you drive her forth
To the cold mansions of the utmost north.
How can our prophet suffer you to reign
When he looks down, and sees your brother slain?
Avenging furies will your life pursue:
Think there's a heav'n, Morat! though not for you.

MELESINDA. [*Aside*] Her words imprint a terror on my mind. [*To* MORAT]
What if this death, which is for him designed,
Had been your doom (far be that augury!),
And you, not Aureng-Zebe, condemned to die?
Weigh well the various turns of human fate,
And seek, by mercy, to secure your state.

INDAMORA. Had Heav'n the crown for Aureng-Zebe designed,
Pity for you had pierced his generous mind.
Pity does with a noble nature suit:
A brother's life had suffered no dispute.
All things have right in life; our prophet's care
Commands the beings ev'n of brutes to spare.
Though int'rest his restraint has justified,
Can life, and to a brother, be denied?

MORAT. All reasons, for his safety urged, are weak:—
And yet, methinks, 'tis heav'n to hear you speak.

MELESINDA. 'Tis part of your own being to invade—

MORAT. Nay, if she fail to move, would you persuade? (*Turning to* INDAMORA)
My brother does a glorious fate pursue;
I envy him, that he must fall for you.
He had been base, had he released his right;
For such an empire none but kings should fight.
If with a father he disputes this prize,
My wonder ceases when I see those eyes.

MELESINDA. And can you, then, deny those eyes you praise?
Can beauty wonder, and not pity raise?

MORAT. Your intercession now is needless grown;
Retire, and let me speak with her alone.
(MELESINDA *retires, weeping, to the side of the stage*)

(*Taking* INDAMORA'S *hand*)
Queen, that you may not fruitless tears employ,
I bring you news to fill your heart with joy.
Your lover, king of all the east shall reign;
For Aureng-Zebe to-morrow shall be slain.
INDAMORA. (*Starting back*) The hopes you raised, y'ave blasted with a breath:
With triumphs you began, but end with death.
Did you not say my lover should be king?
MORAT. I, in Morat, the best of lovers bring.
For one, forsaken both of earth and heav'n,
Your kinder stars a nobler choice have given.
My father, while I please, a king appears;
His pow'r is more declining than his years.
An emperor and lover, but in show;
But you, in me, have youth and fortune too.
As Heav'n did to your eyes and form divine
Submit the fate of all the imperial line,
So was it ordered by its wise decree,
That you should find them all comprised in me.
INDAMORA. If, sir, I seem not discomposed with rage,
Feed not your fancy with a false presage.
Further to press your courtship is but vain;
A cold refusal carries more disdain.
Unsettled virtue stormy may appear;
Honor, like mine, serenely is severe.
To scorn your person, and reject your crown,
Disorder not my face into a frown.
(*Turns from him*)
MORAT. Your fortune you should rev'rently have used;
Such offers are not twice to be refused.
I go to Aureng-Zebe, and am in haste
For your commands; they're like to be the last.
INDAMORA. Tell him,
With my own death I would his life redeem,
But less than honor both our lives esteem.
MORAT. Have you no more?
INDAMORA. (*Aside*) What shall I do or say?
He must not in this fury go away.
—Tell him, I did in vain his brother move;
And yet he falsely said, he was in love.
Falsely, for, had he truly loved, at least
He would have given one day to my request.
MORAT. [*Aside*] A little yielding may my love advance.
She darted from her eyes a sidelong glance
Just as she spoke; and, like her words, it flew—
Seemed not to beg—what yet she bid me do.
(*To her*)
A brother, madam, cannot give a day;
A servant, and who hopes to merit, may.
MELESINDA. (*Coming to him*) If, sir—
MORAT. No more! Set speeches and a formal tale
With none but statesmen and grave fools prevail.
Dry up your tears, and practise every grace
That fits the pageant of your royal place.
Exit
MELESINDA. Madam, the strange reverse of fate you see:
I pitied you, now you may pity me.
Exit after him
INDAMORA. Poor princess! thy hard fate I could bemoan,
Had I not nearer sorrows of my own.
Beauty is seldom fortunate, when great—
A vast estate, but overcharged with debt.
Like those whom want to baseness does betray,
I'm forced to flatter him I cannot pay.
Oh, would he be content to seize the throne!
I beg the life of Aureng-Zebe alone.
Whom Heav'n would bless, from pomp it will remove,
And make their wealth in privacy and love.
Exit

ACT IV

[*A court of the palace*]

Enter AURENG-ZEBE

AURENG-ZEBE. Distrust, and darkness of a future state,
Make poor mankind so fearful of their fate.
Death, in itself, is nothing; but we fear,
To be we know not what, we know not where.
(*Soft music*)

This is the ceremony of my fate;
A parting treat—and I'm to die in state.
They lodge me as I were the Persian king,
And with luxuriant pomp my death they bring.

[*Enter*] *to him* NOURMAHAL

NOURMAHAL. I thought, before you drew your latest breath,
To smooth your passage, and to soften death;
For I would have you, when you upward move,
Speak kindly of me to our friends above.
Nor name me there the occasion of your fate,
Or what my interest does, impute to hate.
AURENG-ZEBE. I ask not for what end your pomp's designed;
Whether t'insult, or to compose my mind.
I marked it not.
But, knowing death would soon th'assault begin,
Stood firm collected in my strength within.
To guard that breach did all my forces guide,
And left unmanned the quiet sense's side.
NOURMAHAL. Because Morat from me his being took,
All I can say will much suspected look.
'Tis little to confess, your fate I grieve;
Yet more than you would easily believe.
AURENG-ZEBE. Since my inevitable death you know,
You safely unavailing pity show.
'Tis popular to mourn a dying foe.
NOURMAHAL. You made my liberty your late request;
Is no return due from a grateful breast?
I grow impatient till I find some way,
Great offices, with greater, to repay.
AURENG-ZEBE. When I consider life, 'tis all a cheat;
Yet, fooled with hope, men favor the deceit,
Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay.
To-morrow's falser than the former day—
Lies worse, and, while it says we shall be blest
With some new joys, cuts off what we possessed.
Strange cozenage! None would live past years again,
Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain!
And, from the dregs of life, think to receive
What the first sprightly running could not give.
I'm tired with waiting for this chemic gold,
Which fools us young and beggars us when old.
NOURMAHAL. 'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue;
It pays our hopes with something still that's new.
Each day's a mistress unenjoyed before;
Like travellers, we're pleased with seeing more.
Did you but know what joys your way attend,
You would not hurry to your journey's end.
AURENG-ZEBE. I need not haste the end of life to meet;
The precipice is just beneath my feet.
NOURMAHAL. Think not my sense of virtue is so small:
I'll rather leap down first, and break your fall. (*Taking him by the hand*)
My Aureng-Zebe (may I not call you so?),
Behold me now no longer for your foe!
I am not, cannot be your enemy.
Look, is there any malice in my eye?
Pray, sit. (*Both sit*)
That distance shows too much respect, or fear;
You'll find no danger in approaching near.
AURENG-ZEBE. Forgive th'amazement of my doubtful state.
This kindness from the mother of Morat!
Or is't some angel, pitying what I bore,
Who takes that shape, to make my wonder more?
NOURMAHAL. Think me your better genius in disguise,
Or anything that more may charm your eyes.
Your guardian angel never could excel
In care, nor could he love his charge so well.
AURENG-ZEBE. Whence can proceed so wonderful a change?
NOURMAHAL. Can kindness to desert, like yours, be strange?

Kindness by secret sympathy is tied,
For noble souls in nature are allied.
I saw with what a brow you braved your fate;
Yet with what mildness bore your father's hate.
My virtue, like a string wound up by art
To the same sound, when yours was touched, took part;
At distance shook, and trembled at my heart.
AURENG-ZEBE. I'll not complain my father is unkind,
Since so much pity from a foe I find.
Just Heav'n, reward this act!
NOURMAHAL. 'Tis well the debt no payment does demand;
You turn me over to another hand.
But happy, happy she,
And with the blest above to be compared,
Whom you yourself would, with yourself, reward!
The greatest—nay, the fairest of her kind,
Would envy her that bliss which you designed.
AURENG-ZEBE. Great princes thus, when favorites they raise,
To justify their grace, their creatures praise.
NOURMAHAL. As love the noblest passion we account,
So to the highest object it should mount.
It shows you brave when mean desires you shun;
An eagle only can behold the sun.
And so must you, if yet presage divine
There be in dreams,—or was't a vision, mine?
AURENG-ZEBE. Of me?
NOURMAHAL. And who could else employ my thought?
I dreamed, your love was by love's goddess sought.
Officious Cupids, hovering o'er your head,
Held myrtle wreaths; beneath your feet were spread
What sweets soe'er Sabæan springs disclose,
Our Indian jasmine, or the Syrian rose.
The wanton ministers around you strove
For service, and inspired their mother's love.
Close by your side, and languishing, she lies,
With blushing cheeks, short breath, and wishing eyes;
Upon your breast supinely lay her head,
While on your face her famished sight she fed.
Then, with a sigh, into these words she broke
(And gathered humid kisses as she spoke),
"Dull, and ingrateful! Must I offer love?
—Desired of gods, and envied even by Jove—
And dost thou ignorance or fear pretend?
Mean soul! and dar'st not gloriously offend?"
Then, pressing thus his hand—
AURENG-ZEBE. (*Rising up*) I'll hear no more.
'Twas impious to have understood before;
And I, till now, endeavored to mistake
The incestuous meaning, which too plain you make.
NOURMAHAL. And why this niceness[1] to that pleasure shown,
Where Nature sums up all her joys in one;
Gives all she can, and, laboring still to give,
Makes it so great, we can but taste and live;
So fills the senses, that the soul seems fled,
And thought itself does, for the time, lie dead;
Till, like a string screwed up with eager haste,
It breaks, and is too exquisite to last?
AURENG-ZEBE. Heav'ns! can you this, without just vengeance, hear?
When will you thunder, if it now be clear?
Yet her alone let not your thunder seize;
I too deserve to die, because I please.
NOURMAHAL. Custom our native royalty does awe;
Promiscuous love is Nature's general law.
For whosoever the first lovers were,
Brother and sister made the second pair,
And doubled, by their love, their piety.
AURENG-ZEBE. Hence, hence, and to some barbarous climate fly
Which only brutes in human form does yield,
And man grows wild in Nature's common field!
Who eat their parents, piety pretend;
Yet there no sons their sacred bed ascend.

1 fastidiousness.

To veil great sins, a greater crime you choose;
And, in your incest, your adult'ry lose.
NOURMAHAL. In vain this haughty fury you have shown.
How I adore a soul so like my own!
You must be mine, that you may learn to live—
Know joys, which only she who loves can give.
Nor think that action you upbraid, so ill:
I am not changed; I love my husband still.
But love him as he was when youthful grace
And the first down began to shade his face;
That image does my virgin-flames renew,
And all your father shines more bright in you.
AURENG-ZEBE. In me a horror of myself you raise;
Cursed by your love, and blasted by your praise.
You find new ways to prosecute my fate;
And your least guilty passion was your hate.
NOURMAHAL. (*Offering him a dagger*) I beg my death, if you can love deny.
AURENG-ZEBE. I'll grant you nothing—no, not even to die!
NOURMAHAL. Know then, you are not half so kind as I.
(*Stamps with her foot*)

Enter Mutes, *some with swords drawn, one with a cup*

You've chosen, and may now repent too late.
Behold the effect of what you wished—my hate! (*Taking the cup to present him*)
This cup a cure for both our ills has brought;
You need not fear a philtre in the draught.
AURENG-ZEBE. (*Receiving it from her*) All must be poison which can come from thee;
But this the least. T'immortal liberty
This first I pour, like dying Socrates;
(*Spilling a little of it*)
Grim though he be, Death pleases when he frees.

As he is going to drink, enter MORAT, *attended*

MORAT. Make not such haste; you must my leisure stay!
Your fate's deferred, you shall not die to-day. (*Taking the cup from him*)
NOURMAHAL. What foolish pity has possessed your mind,
To alter what your prudence once designed?
MORAT. What if I please to lengthen out his date
A day, and take a pride to cozen[1] fate?
NOURMAHAL. 'Twill not be safe to let him live an hour.
MORAT. I'll do't, to show my arbitrary pow'r.
NOURMAHAL. Fortune may take him from your hands again,
And you repent th'occasion lost in vain.
MORAT. I smile at what your female fear foresees;
I'm in Fate's place, and dictate her decrees.
—Let Arimant be called.
Exit one of his Attendants
AURENG-ZEBE. Give me the poison, and I'll end your strife;
I hate to keep a poor, precarious life.
Would I my safety on base terms receive,
Know, sir, I could have lived without your leave.
But those I could accuse, I can forgive;
By my disdainful silence, let them live.
NOURMAHAL. (*To* MORAT) What am I, that you dare to bind my hand?
So low, I've not a murder at command!
Can you not one poor life to her afford—
Her who gave up whole nations to your sword?
And from th'abundance of whose soul and heat,
The o'erflowing served to make your mind so great?
MORAT. What did that greatness in a woman's mind—
Ill lodged, and weak to act what it designed?
Pleasure's your portion, and your slothful ease;

[1] deceive.

When man's at leisure, study how to please.
Soften his angry hours with servile care,
And, when he calls, the ready feast prepare.
From wars, and from affairs of state abstain;
Women emasculate a monarch's reign;
And murmuring crowds, who see 'em shine with gold,
That pomp, as their own ravished spoils, behold.

NOURMAHAL. (*Aside*) Rage chokes my words. 'Tis womanly to weep.
In my swoll'n breast my close revenge I'll keep;
I'll watch his tenderest part and there strike deep. *Exit*

AURENG-ZEBE. Your strange proceeding does my wonder move;
Yet seems not to express a brother's love.
Say, to what cause my rescued life I owe.

MORAT. If what you ask would please, you should not know.
But since that knowledge, more than death, will grieve,
Know, Indamora gained you this reprieve.

AURENG-ZEBE. And whence had she the pow'r to work your change?

MORAT. The pow'r of beauty is not new or strange.
Should she command me more, I could obey;
But her request was bounded with a day.
Take that; and, if you spare my further crime,
Be kind, and grieve to death against your time.

Enter ARIMANT

Remove this pris'ner to some safer place.
He has, for Indamora's sake, found grace;
And from my mother's rage must guarded be,
Till you receive a new command from me.

ARIMANT. (*Aside*) Thus love and fortune persecute me still,
And make me slave to every rival's will.

AURENG-ZEBE. How I disdain a life which I must buy
With your contempt and her inconstancy!
For a few hours my whole content I pay:
You shall not force on me another day.

Exit with ARIMANT

Enter MELESINDA [*to* MORAT]

MELESINDA. I have been seeking you this hour's long space,
And feared to find you in another place.
But since you're here, my jealousy grows less;
You will be kind to my unworthiness.
What shall I say? I love to that degree,
Each glance another way, is robbed from me.
Absence and prisons I could bear again,
But sink and die beneath your least disdain.

MORAT. Why do you give your mind this needless care,
And for yourself and me new pains prepare?
I ne'er approved this passion in excess:
If you would show your love, distrust me less.
I hate to be pursued from place to place—
Meet, at each turn, a stale, domestic face.
Th'approach of jealousy love cannot bear;
He's wild and soon on wing, if watchful eyes come near.

MELESINDA. From your loved presence how can I depart?
My eyes pursue the object of my heart.

MORAT. You talk as if it were our bridal night.
Fondness is still th'effect of new delight,
And marriage but the pleasure of a day;
The metal's base, the gilding worn away.

MELESINDA. I fear I'm guilty of some great offence,
And that has bred this cold indifference.

MORAT. The greatest in the world to flesh and blood—
You fondly love much longer than you should.

MELESINDA. If that be all which makes your discontent,
Of such a crime I never can repent.

MORAT. Would you force love upon me which I shun?
And bring coarse fare when appetite is gone?

MELESINDA. Why did I not in prison die before
My fatal freedom made me suffer more?
I had been pleased to think I died for you,
And doubly pleased, because you then were true.

Then I had hope—but now, alas! have none.
MORAT. You say you love me; let that love be shown.
'Tis in your pow'r to make my happiness.
MELESINDA. Speak quickly! To command me is to bless.
MORAT. To Indamora you my suit must move.
You'll sure speak kindly of the man you love.
MELESINDA. Oh, rather let me perish by your hand,
Than break my heart by this unkind command!
Think, 'tis the only one I could deny;
And that 'tis harder to refuse than die!
Try, if you please, my rival's heart to win;
I'll bear the pain, but not promote the sin.
You own whate'er perfections man can boast,
And, if she view you with my eyes, she's lost.
MORAT. Here I renounce all love, all nuptial ties;
Henceforward live a stranger to my eyes.
When I appear, see you avoid the place,
And haunt me not with that unlucky face.
MELESINDA. Hard as it is, I this command obey,
And haste, while I have life, to go away.
In pity stay some hours, till I am dead,
That blameless you may court my rival's bed.
My hated face I'll not presume to show;
Yet I may watch your steps where'er you go.
Unseen I'll gaze, and, with my latest breath,
Bless, while I die, the author of my death.
(*Weeping*)

Enter EMPEROR

EMPEROR. When your triumphant fortune high appears
What cause can draw these unbecoming tears?
Let cheerfulness on happy fortune wait,
And give not thus the counter-time to fate.
MELESINDA. Fortune long frowned, and has but lately smiled:
I doubt a foe so newly reconciled.
You saw but sorrow in its waning form,
A working sea remaining from a storm
When the now weary waves roll o'er the deep,
And faintly murmur ere they fall asleep.
EMPEROR. Your inward griefs you smother in your mind,
But Fame's loud voice proclaims your lord unkind.
MORAT. Let Fame be busy where she has to do—
Tell of fought fields and every pompous show.
Those tales are fit to fill the people's ears;
Monarchs, unquestioned, move in higher spheres.
MELESINDA. Believe not rumor, but yourself; and see
The kindness 'twixt my plighted lord and me. (*Kissing* MORAT)
This is our state; thus happily we live;
These are the quarrels which we take and give. (*Aside to* MORAT)
I had no other way to force a kiss.
Forgive my last farewell to you and bliss.
Exit
EMPEROR. Your haughty carriage shows too much of scorn,
And love like hers deserves not that return.
MORAT. You'll please to leave me judge of what I do,
And not examine by the outward show.
Your usage of my mother might be good:
I judged it not.
EMPEROR. Nor was it fit you should.
MORAT. Then, in as equal balance weigh my deeds.
EMPEROR. My right and my authority, exceeds.
Suppose (what I'll not grant) injustice done;
Is judging me the duty of a son?
MORAT. Not of a son, but of an emperor:
You cancelled duty when you gave me pow'r.
If your own actions on your will you ground,
Mine shall hereafter know no other bound.
What meant you when you called me to a throne?
Was it to please me with a name alone?

EMPEROR. 'Twas that I thought your gratitude would know
What to my partial kindness you did owe;
That what your birth did to your claim deny,
Your merit of obedience might supply.
MORAT. To your own thoughts such hope you might propose,
But I took empire not on terms like those.
Of business you complained—now take your ease;
Enjoy whate'er decrepit age can please.
Eat, sleep, and tell long tales of what you were
In flower of youth—if anyone will hear.
EMPEROR. Pow'r, like new wine, does your weak brain surprise,
And its mad fumes, in hot discourses, rise.
But time these giddy vapors will remove;
Meanwhile, I'll taste the sober joys of love.
MORAT. You cannot love nor pleasures take, or give,
But life begin when 'tis too late to live.
On a tired courser you pursue delight,
Let slip your morning, and set out at night.
If you have lived, take thankfully the past;
Make, as you can, the sweet remembrance last.
If you have not enjoyed what youth could give,
But life sunk through you, like a leaky sieve;
Accuse yourself you lived not while you might.
But, in the captive queen resign your right.
I've now resolved to fill your useless place;
I'll take that post, to cover your disgrace,
And love her for the honor of my race.
EMPEROR. Thou dost but try how far I can forbear,
Nor art that monster which thou wouldst appear!
But do not wantonly my passion move;
I pardon nothing that relates to love.
My fury does, like jealous forts, pursue
With death even strangers who but come to view.
MORAT. I did not only view, but will invade.
Could you shed venom from your reverend shade,
Like trees beneath whose arms 'tis death to sleep;
Did rolling thunder your fenced fortress keep,
Thence would I snatch my Semele, like Jove,
And 'midst the dreadful wrack enjoy my love.
EMPEROR. Have I for this, ungrateful as thou art,
When right, when nature, struggled in my heart;
When Heav'n called on me for thy brother's claim—
Broke all, and sullied my unspotted fame?
Wert thou to empire, by my baseness, brought,
And wouldst thou ravish what so dear I bought?
Dear! for my conscience and its peace I gave;
Why was my reason made my passion's slave?
I see Heav'n's justice; thus the powers divine
Pay crimes with crimes, and punish mine by thine!
MORAT. Crimes let them pay, and punish as they please;
What pow'r makes mine, by pow'r I mean to seize.
Since 'tis to that they their own greatness owe
Above, why should they question mine below? *Exit* [MORAT]
EMPEROR. Prudence, thou vainly in our youth art sought,
And, with age purchased, art too dearly bought.
We're past the use of wit, for which we toil—
Late fruit, and planted in too cold a soil.
My stock of fame is lavished and decayed;
No profit of the vast profusion made.
Too late my folly I repent; I know
My Aureng-Zebe would ne'er have used me so.
But, by his ruin, I prepared my own,
And like a naked tree, my shelter gone,
To winds and winter-storms must stand exposed alone. *Exit* [*the* EMPEROR]

[*Enter*] AURENG-ZEBE [*and*] ARIMANT

ARIMANT. Give me not thanks, which I will ne'er deserve,
But know, 'tis for a noble price I serve.
By Indamora's will you're hither brought:
All my reward in her command I sought.
The rest your letter tells you.—See, like light
She comes, and I must vanish like the night.
Exit

Enter INDAMORA

INDAMORA. 'Tis now that I begin to live again;
Heav'ns, I forgive you all my fear and pain!
Since I behold my Aureng-Zebe appear,
I could not buy him at a price too dear.
His name alone afforded me relief,
Repeated as a charm to cure my grief.
I that loved name did, as some god, invoke,
And printed kisses on it while I spoke.
AURENG-ZEBE. Short ease, but long, long pains from you I find;
Health to my eyes, but poison to my mind.
Why are you made so excellently fair?
So much above what other beauties are
That, even in cursing, you new-form my breath,
And make me bless those eyes which give me death!
INDAMORA. What reason for your curses can you find?
My eyes your conquest, not your death, designed.
If they offend, 'tis that they are too kind.
AURENG-ZEBE. The ruins they have wrought, you will not see;
Too kind they are, indeed, but not to me.
INDAMORA. Think you base interest souls like mine can sway?
Or that, for greatness, I can love betray?
No, Aureng-Zebe, you merit all my heart,
And I'm too noble but to give a part.
Your father, and an empire! Am I known
No more? Or have so weak a judgment shown,
In choosing you, to change you for a throne?
AURENG-ZEBE. How, with a truth, you would a falsehood blind!
'Tis not my father's love you have designed;
Your choice is fix'd where youth and power are joined.
INDAMORA. Where youth and pow'r are joined!—has he a name?
AURENG-ZEBE. You would be told; you glory in your shame!
There's music in the sound; and, to provoke
Your pleasure more, by me it must be spoke.
Then—then it ravishes, when your pleased ear
The sound does from a wretched rival hear.
Morat's the name your heart leaps up to meet,
While Aureng-Zebe lies dying at your feet.
INDAMORA. Who told you this?
AURENG-ZEBE. Are you so lost to shame?
Morat, Morat, Morat! You love the name
So well, your ev'ry question ends in that;
You force me still to answer you—Morat!
Morat, who best could tell what you revealed;
Morat, too proud to keep his joy concealed.
INDAMORA. Howe'er unjust your jealousy appear,
It shows the loss of what you love, you fear;
And does my pity, not my anger move.
I'll fond[1] it, as the froward child of love.
To show the truth of my unaltered breast,
Know that your life was given at my request,
At last reprieved. When Heav'n denied you aid,
She brought it—she whose falsehood you upbraid!
AURENG-ZEBE. And 'tis by that you would your falsehood hide?
Had you not asked, how happy had I died!
Accursed reprieve! not to prolong my breath—
It brought a ling'ring, and more painful death.
I have not lived since first I heard the news;
The gift the guilty giver does accuse.

[1] act foolishly.

You knew the price, and the request did move
That you might pay the ransom with your love.
INDAMORA. Your accusation must, I see, take place;
And am I guilty, infamous, and base?
AURENG-ZEBE. If you are false, those epithets are small;
You're then the things, the abstract of 'em all.
And you are false. You promised him your love—
No other price a heart so hard could move.
Do not I know him? Could his brutal mind
Be wrought upon? Could he be just or kind?
Insultingly he made your love his boast;
Gave me my life, and told me what it cost.
Speak—answer! I would fain yet think you true.
Lie; and I'll not believe myself, but you.
Tell me you love; I'll pardon the deceit,
And, to be fooled, myself assist the cheat.
INDAMORA. No, 'tis too late. I have no more to say.
If you'll believe I have been false, you may.
AURENG-ZEBE. I would not, but your crimes too plain appear;
Nay, even that I should think you true, you fear.
Did I not tell you, I would be deceived?
INDAMORA. I'm not concerned to have my truth believed.
—You would be cozened! would assist the cheat!
—But I'm too plain to join in the deceit.
I'm pleased you think me false—
And, whatsoe'er my letter did pretend,
I made this meeting for no other end.
AURENG-ZEBE. Kill me not quite with this indifference!
When you are guiltless, boast not an offence.
I know you better than yourself you know.
Your heart was true, but did some frailty show;
You promised him your love, that I might live,
But promised what you never meant to give.
Speak, was't not so? Confess! I can forgive.
INDAMORA. Forgive! what dull excuses you prepare,
As if your thoughts of me were worth my care!
AURENG-ZEBE. Ah, traitress! Ah, ingrate! Ah, faithless mind!
Ah, sex, invented first to damn mankind!
Nature took care to dress you up for sin—
Adorned, without; unfinished left, within.
Hence, by no judgment you your loves direct—
Talk much, ne'er think, and still the wrong affect.
So much self-love in your composure's mixed,
That love to others still remains unfixed.
Greatness, and noise, and show, are your delight;
Yet wise men love you, in their own despite:
And finding in their native wit no ease,
Are forced to put your folly on, to please.
INDAMORA. Now you shall know what cause you have to rage—
But to increase your fury, not assuage.
I found the way your brother's heart to move,
Yet promised not the least return of love.
His pride and brutal fierceness I abhor,
But scorn your mean suspicions of me more.
I owed my honor and my fame this care:
Know what your folly lost you, and despair!
(*Turning from him*)
AURENG-ZEBE. Too cruelly your innocence you tell—
Show Heav'n, and damn me to the pit of hell!
Now I believe you; 'tis not yet too late!
You may forgive, and put a stop to fate.
Save me, just sinking, and no more to rise!
(*She frowns*)
How can you look with such relentless eyes?
Or let your mind by penitence be moved,
Or I'm resolved to think you never loved.
You are not cleared unless you mercy speak;
I'll think you took th'occasion thus to break.
INDAMORA. Small jealousies, 'tis true, inflame desire;
Too great not fan, but quite blow out the fire.

Yet I did love you till such pains I bore
That I dare trust myself and you no more.
Let me not love you, but here end my pain;
Distrust may make me wretched once again.
Now, with full sails, into the port I move,
And safely can unlade my breast of love—
Quiet and calm. Why should I then go back
To tempt the second hazard of a wrack?
AURENG-ZEBE. Behold these dying eyes, see their submissive awe—
These tears, which fear of death could never draw!
Heard you that sigh? from my heaved heart it passed,
And said, "If you forgive not, 'tis my last."
Love mounts and rolls about my stormy mind
Like fire that's borne by a tempestuous wind.
Oh, I could stifle you, with eager haste!
Devour your kisses with my hungry taste!
Rush on you!—eat you!—wander o'er each part,
Raving with pleasure, snatch you to my heart!
Then hold you off, and gaze!—then, with new rage,
Invade you till my conscious limbs presage
Torrents of joy, which all their banks o'erflow!
So lost, so blest, as I but then could know!
INDAMORA. (*Giving him her hand*) Be no more jealous!
AURENG-ZEBE. Give me cause no more:
The danger's greater after than before.
If I relapse, to cure my jealousy,
Let me (for that's the easiest parting) die.
INDAMORA. My life!
AURENG-ZEBE. My soul!
INDAMORA. My all that Heav'n can give!
Death's life with you; without you, death to live.

[*Enter*] *to them* ARIMANT, *hastily*

ARIMANT. Oh, we are lost, beyond all human aid!
The citadel is to Morat betrayed!
The traitor and the treason known too late—
The false Abas delivered up the gate.
Even while I speak, we're compassed round with fate.
The valiant cannot fight, or coward fly,
But both in undistinguished crowds must die.
AURENG-ZEBE. Then my prophetic fears are come to pass:
Morat was always bloody—now he's base!
And has so far in usurpation gone,
He will by parricide secure a throne.

[*Enter*] *to them the* EMPEROR

EMPEROR. Am I forsaken and betrayed by all?
—Not one brave man dare, with a monarch, fall?
Then welcome, Death, to cover my disgrace!
I would not live to reign o'er such a race.
(*Seeing* AURENG-ZEBE)
My Aureng-Zebe!
—But thou no more art mine; my cruelty
Has quite destroyed the right I had in thee.
I have been base,
—Base ev'n to him from whom I did receive
All that a son could to a parent give.
Behold me punished in the selfsame kind;
Th'ungrateful does a more ungrateful find.
AURENG-ZEBE. Accuse yourself no more; you could not be
Ungrateful—could commit no crime to me.
I only mourn my yet uncancelled score;
You put me past the pow'r of paying more.
That—that's my grief, that I can only grieve,
And bring but pity where I would relieve;
For had I yet ten thousand lives to pay,
The mighty sum should go no other way.
EMPEROR. Can you forgive me? 'tis not fit you should.
Why will you be so excellently good?
'Twill stick too black a brand upon my name!
The sword is needless; I shall die with shame.
What had my age to do with love's delight,
Shut out from all enjoyments but the sight?

ARIMANT. Sir, you forget the danger's imminent;
This minute is not for excuses lent.
EMPEROR. Disturb me not.
How can my latest hour be better spent?
To reconcile myself to him is more
Than to regain all I possessed before.
Empire and life are now not worth a prayer;
His love alone deserves my dying care.
AURENG-ZEBE. Fighting for you, my death will glorious be.
INDAMORA. Seek to preserve yourself, and live for me.
ARIMANT. Lose then no further time.
Heav'n has inspired me with a sudden thought,
Whence your unhoped-for safety may be wrought
Though with the hazard of my blood 'tis bought.
But since my life can ne'er be fortunate,
'Tis so much sorrow well redeemed from fate.
You, madam, must retire
(Your beauty is its own security),
And leave the conduct of the rest to me.
(*Aside*)
Glory will crown my life if I succeed;
If not, she may afford to love me dead.
AURENG-ZEBE. My father's kind, and, madam, you forgive;
Were Heav'n so pleased, I now could wish to live.
And I shall live!
With glory and with love at once I burn:
I feel th'inspiring heat and absent god return.
Exeunt

ACT V

[*A court of the palace*]

INDAMORA *alone*

INDAMORA. The night seems doubled with the fear she brings,
And o'er the citadel new-spreads her wings.
The morning, as mistaken, turns about,
And all her early fires again go out.
Shouts, cries, and groans, first pierce my ears and then
A flash of lightning draws the guilty scene,
And shows me arms, and wounds, and dying men.
Ah, should my Aureng-Zebe be fighting there,
And envious winds, distinguished to my ear,
His dying groans and his last accents bear!

[*Enter*] *to her* MORAT, *attended*

MORAT. The bloody business of the night is done,
And in the citadel, an empiré won.
Our swords so wholly did the fates employ,
That they, at length, grew weary to destroy;
Refused the work we brought, and, out of breath,
Made sorrow and despair attend for death.
But what of all my conquest can I boast?
My haughty pride, before your eyes, is lost;
And victory but gains me to present
That homage which our eastern world has sent.
INDAMORA. Your victory, alas! begets my fears.
Can you not then triumph without my tears?
Resolve[1] me (for you know my destiny
Is Aureng-Zebe's)—say, do I live or die?
MORAT. Urged by my love, by hope of empire fired,
'Tis true, I have performed what both required—
What fate decreed; for when great souls are given,
They bear the marks of sov'reignty from Heav'n.
My elder brothers my forerunners came—
Rough-draughts of nature, ill designed, and lame;
Blown off, like blossoms never made to bear,
Till I came, finished, her last-labored care.
INDAMORA. This prologue leads to your succeeding sin.
Blood ended what ambition did begin.
MORAT. 'Twas rumored—but by whom I cannot tell—
My father 'scaped from out the citadel;

[1] satisfy.

My brother too may live.
INDAMORA. He may?
MORAT. He must!
I killed him not, and a less fate's unjust.
Heav'n owes it me, that I may fill his room,
A phœnix-lover, rising from his tomb;
In whom you'll lose your sorrows for the dead;
More warm, more fierce, and fitter for your bed.
INDAMORA. Should I from Aureng-Zebe my heart divide,
To love a monster, and a parricide?
These names your swelling titles cannot hide.
Severe decrees may keep our tongues in awe,
But to our thoughts, what edict can give law?
Ev'n you yourself, to your own breast shall tell
Your crimes; and your own conscience be your hell.
MORAT. What business has my conscience with a crown?
She sinks in pleasures, and in bowls will drown.
If mirth should fail, I'll busy her with cares,
Silence her clamorous voice with louder wars.
Trumpets and drums shall fright her from the throne,
As sounding cymbals aid the lab'ring moon.
INDAMORA. Repelled by these, more eager she will grow,
Spring back more strongly than a Scythian bow.
Amidst your train, this unseen judge will wait;
Examine how you came by all your state;
Upbraid your impious pomp; and, in your ear,
Will hollo, "Rebel, tyrant, murderer!"
Your ill-got pow'r wan looks and care shall bring—
Known but by discontent to be a king.
Of crowds afraid, yet anxious when alone,
You'll sit and brood your sorrows on a throne.
MORAT. Birthright's a vulgar road to kingly sway;
'Tis ev'ry dull-got elder brother's way.
Dropped from above, he lights into a throne,
Grows of a piece with that he sits upon;
Heav'n's choice—a low, inglorious, rightful drone.
But who by force a sceptre does obtain,
Shows he can govern that which he could gain.
Right comes of course, whate'er he was before;
Murder and usurpation are no more.
INDAMORA. By your own laws you such dominion make,
As ev'ry stronger power has right to take:
And parricide will so deform your name,
That dispossessing you will give a claim.
Who next usurps, will a just prince appear,
So much your ruin will his reign endear.
MORAT. I without guilt would mount the royal seat,
But yet 'tis necessary to be great.
INDAMORA. All greatness is in virtue understood;
'Tis only necessary to be good.
Tell me, what is't at which great spirits aim,
What most yourself desire?
MORAT. Renown and fame,
And pow'r, as uncontrolled as is my will.
INDAMORA. How you confound desires of good and ill!
For true renown is still with virtue joined,
But lust of pow'r lets loose th'unbridled mind.
Yours is a soul irregularly great,
Which, wanting temper, yet abounds with heat.
So strong, yet so unequal pulses beat;
A sun which does, through vapors, dimly shine:
What pity 'tis, you are not all divine!
New moulded, thorough lightened, and a breast
So pure, to bear the last severest test;
Fit to command an empire you should gain
By virtue, and without a blush to reign.
MORAT. You show me somewhat I ne'er learned before,
But 'tis the distant prospect of a shore
Doubtful in mists; which, like enchanted ground,
Flies from my sight before 'tis fully found.

INDAMORA. Dare to be great, without a guilty crown;
View it, and lay the bright temptation down!
'Tis base to seize on all because you may;
That's empire, that which I can give away.
There's joy when to wild will you laws prescribe,
When you bid Fortune carry back her bribe—
A joy which none but greatest minds can taste;
A fame which will to endless ages last.
MORAT. Renown and fame in vain I courted long,
And still pursued them, though directed wrong.
In hazard and in toils I heard they lay;
Sailed farther than the coast, but missed my way.
Now you have given me virtue for my guide,
And with true honor ballasted my pride,
Unjust dominion I no more pursue;
I quit all other claims but those to you.
INDAMORA. Oh, be not just by halves! Pay all you owe.
Think, there's a debt to Melesinda too!
To leave no blemish on your after-life,
Reward the virtue of a suff'ring wife.
MORAT. To love, once past, I cannot backward move;
Call yesterday again, and I may love.
'Twas not for nothing I the crown resigned;
I still must own a mercenary mind.
I, in this venture, double gains pursue,
And laid out all my stock to purchase you.

[*Enter*] *to them* ASAPH KHAN

—Now what success? does Aureng-Zebe yet live?
ASAPH. Fortune has given you all that she can give.
Your brother—
MORAT. Hold! thou show'st an impious joy.
And think'st I still take pleasure to destroy.
Know, I am changed, and would not have him slain.
ASAPH. 'Tis past; and you desire his life in vain.
He, prodigal of soul, rushed on the stroke
Of lifted weapons, and did wounds provoke.
In scorn of night, he would not be concealed;
His soldiers, where he fought, his name revealed.
In thickest crowds, still Aureng-Zebe did sound;
The vaulted roofs did Aureng-Zebe rebound;
Till late, and in his fall, the name was drowned.
INDAMORA. Wither that hand which brought him to his fate,
And blasted be the tongue which did relate!
ASAPH. His body—
MORAT. Cease to enhance her misery;
Pity the queen, and show respect to me.
'Tis ev'ry painter's art to hide from sight,
And cast in shades what, seen, would not delight. (*To her*)
Your grief in me such sympathy has bred,—
I mourn and wish I could recall the dead.
Love softens me, and blows up fires which pass
Through my tough heart, and melt the stubborn mass.
INDAMORA. Break, heart! or choke, with sobs, my hated breath!
Do thy own work: admit no foreign death!
Alas! why do I make this useless moan?
I'm dead already, for my soul is gone.

[*Enter*] *to them* MIR BABA

MIR BABA. What tongue the terror of this night can tell,
Within, without, and round the citadel!
A new-formed faction does your pow'r oppose;
The fight's confused, and all who meet are foes.
A second clamor from the town we hear,
And the far noise so loud, it drowns the near.
Abas, who seemed our friend, is either fled,
Or, what we fear, our enemies does head.
Your frighted soldiers scarce their ground maintain.
MORAT. I thank their fury; we shall fight again.
They rouse my rage; I'm eager to subdue!
—'Tis fatal to withhold my eyes from you.
Exit with the two Omrahs

Enter MELESINDA

MELESINDA. Can misery no place of safety know?
The noise pursues me wheresoe'er I go;
As Fate sought only me, and, where I fled,
Aimed all its darts at my devoted head.
And let it! I am now past care of life—
The last of women, an abandoned wife.
INDAMORA. Whether design or chance has brought you here,
I stand obliged to fortune, or to fear:
Weak women should, in danger, herd like deer.
But say, from whence this new combustion springs?
Are there yet more Morats?—more fighting kings?
MELESINDA. Him from his mother's love your eyes divide,
And now her arms the cruel strife decide.
INDAMORA. What strange misfortunes my vexed life attend!
Death will be kind and all my sorrows end.
If Nourmahal prevail, I know my fate.
MELESINDA. I pity, as my own, your hard estate,
But what can my weak charity afford?
I have no longer int'rest in my lord:
Nor in his mother, he. She owns her hate
Aloud, and would herself usurp the state.
INDAMORA. I'm stupefied with sorrow, past relief
Of tears; parched up, and withered with my grief.
MELESINDA. Dry mourning will decays more deadly bring,
As a north wind burns a too forward spring.
Give sorrow vent, and let the sluices go.
INDAMORA. My tears are all congealed, and will not flow.
MELESINDA. Have comfort! yield not to the blows of fate.
INDAMORA. Comfort, like cordials after death, comes late.
Name not so vain a word! my hopes are fled.
Think you Morat were kind, and think him dead.
MELESINDA. I can no more—
Can no more arguments, for comfort, find.
Your boding words have quite o'erwhelmed my mind.
(*Clattering of weapons within*)
INDAMORA. The noise increases, as the billows roar
When rolling from afar they threat the shore.
She comes! and feeble nature now, I find,
Shrinks back in danger, and forsakes my mind.
I wish to die, yet dare not death endure;
Detest the medicine, yet desire the cure.
I would have death—but mild, and at command:
I dare not trust him in another's hand.
In Nourmahal's, he would not mine, appear;
But armed with terror and disguised with fear.
MELESINDA. Beyond this place you can have no retreat;
Stay here, and I the danger will repeat.
I fear not death because my life I hate,
And envious death will shun the unfortunate.
INDAMORA. You must not venture.
MELESINDA. Let me! I may do
Myself a kindness, in obliging you.
In your loved name I'll seek my angry lord,
And beg your safety from his conquering sword;
So his protection all your fears will ease,
And I shall see him once, and not displease.
Exit
INDAMORA. O wretched queen! what pow'r thy life can save?
A stranger, and unfriended, and a slave!

Enter NOURMAHAL, ZAYDA, *and* ABAS, *with* Soldiers

—Alas, she's here!
[INDAMORA *withdraws to the inner stage*]
NOURMAHAL. Heartless they fought, and quitted soon their ground,
While ours with easy victory were crowned.
To you, Abas, my life and empire too,
And, what's yet dearer—my revenge—I owe.

ABAS. The vain Morat, by his own rashness wrought,
Too soon discovered his ambitious thought;
Believed me his because I spoke him fair,
And pitched his head into the ready snare.
Hence 'twas I did his troops at first admit,
But such whose numbers could no fears beget.
By them the emperor's party first I slew,
Then turned my arms the victors to subdue.

NOURMAHAL. Now let the headstrong boy my will control!
Virtue's no slave of man; no sex confines the soul.
I, for myself, th'imperial seat will gain,
And he shall wait my leisure for his reign.
—But Aureng-Zebe is nowhere to be found;
And now, perhaps, in death's cold arms he lies!
I fought, and conquered, yet have lost the prize!

ZAYDA. The chance of war determined well the strife
That racked you, 'twixt the lover and the wife.
He's dead, whose love had sullied all your reign,
And made you empress of the world in vain.

NOURMAHAL. No! I my pow'r and pleasure would divide;
The drudge had quenched my flames, and then had died.
I rage to think without that bliss I live;
That I could wish what Fortune would not give.
But, what love cannot, vengeance must supply;
She who bereaved me of his heart, shall die.

ZAYDA. I'll search. Far distant hence she cannot be. *Goes in*

NOURMAHAL. This wondrous masterpiece I fain would see—
This fatal Helen, who can wars inspire,
Make kings her slaves, and set the world on fire.
My husband locked his jewel from my view,
Or durst not set the false one by the true.

Re-enter ZAYDA, *leading* INDAMORA

ZAYDA. Your frighted captive, ere she dies, receive!
Her soul's just going else without your leave.

NOURMAHAL. A fairer creature did my eyes ne'er see!
Sure she was formed by Heav'n in spite to me!
Some angel copied while I slept, each grace,
And moulded every feature from my face.
Such majesty does from her forehead rise!
Her cheeks such blushes cast—such rays her eyes!
Nor I, nor envy, can a blemish find. (*To her*)
The palace is, without, too well designed;
Conduct me in, for I will view thy mind.
Speak, if thou hast a soul, that I may see
If Heav'n can make, throughout, another me.

INDAMORA. (*Kneeling*) My tears and miseries must plead my cause;
My words, the terror of your presence awes.
Mortals, in sight of angels, mute become;
The nobler nature strikes th'inferior dumb.

NOURMAHAL. The palm is, by the foe's confession, mine,
But I disdain what basely you resign.
Heav'n did, by me, the outward model build;
Its inward work, the soul, with rubbish filled.
Yet, oh! th'imperfect piece moves more delight;
'Tis gilded o'er with youth, to catch the sight.
The gods have poorly robbed my virgin bloom,
And what I am, by what I was, o'ercome.
Traitress, restore my beauty and my charms,
Nor steal my conquest with my proper arms!

INDAMORA. What have I done thus to inflame your hate?
I am not guilty, but unfortunate.

NOURMAHAL. Not guilty, when thy looks my pow'r betray?
Seduce mankind, my subject, from my sway?
Take all my hearts and all my eyes away?

My husband first—but that I could forgive;
He only moved, and talked, but did not live.
My Aureng-Zebe!—for I dare own the name,
The glorious sin, and the more glorious flame—
Him from my beauty have thy eyes misled,
And starved the joys of my expected bed.
INDAMORA. His love so sought, he's happy that he's dead.
Oh, had I courage but to meet my fate,
That short dark passage to a future state,
That melancholy riddle of a breath!
NOURMAHAL. That something, or that nothing, after death! (*Giving a dagger*)
Take this, and teach thyself.
INDAMORA. Alas!
NOURMAHAL. Why dost thou shake?
Dishonor not the vengeance I designed—
A queen, and own a base, plebeian mind!
Let it drink deep in thy most vital part;
Strike home, and do me reason[1] in thy heart!
INDAMORA. I dare not.
NOURMAHAL. Do't, while I stand by and see,
At my full gust, without the drudgery.
I love a foe who dares my stroke prevent,
Who gives me the full scene of my content;
Shows me the flying soul's convulsive strife,
And all the anguish of departing life.
Disdain my mercy, and my rage defy;
Curse me with thy last breath, and make me see
A spirit worthy to have rivalled me!
INDAMORA. Oh, I desire to die, but dare not yet!
Give me some respite; I'll discharge the debt.
Without my Aureng-Zebe I would not live.
NOURMAHAL. Thine, traitress! thine! that word has winged thy fate,
And put me past the tedious forms of hate!
I'll kill thee with such eagerness and haste
As fiends, let loose, would lay all nature waste.
(INDAMORA *runs back. As* NOURMAHAL *is running to her, clashing of swords is heard within*)

SOLDIER. (*Within*) Yield, you're o'erpowered: resistance is in vain.
MORAT. (*Within*) Then death's my choice: submission I disdain.
NOURMAHAL. (*At the door*) Retire, ye slaves!—Ah, whither does he run
On pointed swords?—Disarm, but save my son!

Enter MORAT, *staggering, and upheld by* Soldiers

MORAT. She lives! and I shall see her once again!
I have not thrown away my life in vain.
(*Catches hold of* INDAMORA'S *gown, and falls by her. She sits*)
I can no more; yet ev'n in death I find
My fainting body biassed by my mind.
I fall toward you; still my contending soul
Points to your breast, and trembles to its pole.

[*Enter*] *to them* MELESINDA, *hastily casting herself on the other side of* MORAT

MELESINDA. Ah, woe, woe, woe! the worst of woes I find!
Live still—oh, live! live ev'n to be unkind!—
With half-shut eyes he seeks the doubtful day;
But, ah! he bends his sight another way.
He faints! and in that sigh his soul is gone:
Yet Heav'n's unmoved; yet Heav'n looks careless on.
NOURMAHAL. Where are those pow'rs which monarchs should defend?
Or do they vain authority pretend
O'er human fates, and their weak empire show,
Which cannot guard their images below?
If, as their image, he was not divine,
They ought to have respected him as mine.
I'll waken them with my revenge, and she—
Their Indamora—shall my victim be,
And helpless Heav'n shall mourn in vain, like me.
(*As she is going to stab* INDAMORA, MORAT *raises himself and holds her hand*)

[1] justice.

MORAT. Ah, what are we,
Who dare maintain with Heav'n this wretched strife,
Puffed with the pride of Heav'n's own gift, frail life?
That blast which my ambitious spirit swelled,
See by how weak a tenure it was held!
I only stay to save the innocent;
Oh, envy not my soul its last content!
INDAMORA. No, let me die; I'm doubly summoned now—
First by my Aureng-Zebe, and since by you.
My soul grows hardy, and can death endure;
Your convoy makes the dangerous way secure.
MELESINDA. Let me at least a funeral marriage crave,
Nor grudge my cold embraces in the grave.
I have too just a title in the strife;
By me, unhappy me, he lost his life!
I called him hither—'twas my fatal breath,
And I the screech-owl that proclaimed his death. (*Shout within*)
ABAS. What new alarms are these? I'll haste and see. *Exit*
NOURMAHAL. Look up and live! an empire shall be thine!
MORAT. That I contemned, ev'n when I thought it mine. (*To* INDAMORA)
Oh, I must yield to my hard destinies,
And must forever cease to see your eyes!
MELESINDA. Ah, turn your sight to me, my dearest lord!
Can you not one, one parting look afford?
Ev'n so unkind in death?—but 'tis in vain;
I lose my breath, and to the winds complain.
Yet 'tis as much in vain—your cruel scorn;
Still I can love, without this last return.
Nor fate, nor you, can my vowed faith control;
Dying, I follow your disdainful soul.
A ghost, I'll haunt your ghost, and where you go,
With mournful murmurs fill the plains below.
MORAT. Be happy, Melesinda! Cease to grieve,
And for a more deserving husband live!
—Can you forgive me?
MELESINDA. Can I? O my heart!
Have I heard one kind word before I part?
I can, I can forgive. Is that a task
To love like mine? Are you so good to ask?
One kiss—oh, 'tis too great a blessing this— (*Kisses him*)
I would not live to violate the bliss.

Re-enter ABAS

ABAS. Some envious devil has ruined us yet more;
The fort's revolted to the Emperor.
The gates are opened, the portcullis drawn,
And deluges of armies from the town
Come pouring in. I heard the mighty flaw,
When first it broke; the crowding ensigns saw,
Which choked the passage; and (what least I feared)
The waving arms of Aureng-Zebe appeared,
Displayed with your Morat's.
In either's flag the golden serpents bear
Erected crests alike, like volumes rear,
And mingle friendly hissings in the air.
Their troops are joined, and our destruction nigh.
NOURMAHAL. 'Tis vain to fight, and I disdain to fly.
I'll mock the triumphs which our foes intend,
And, spite of fortune, make a glorious end.
In pois'nous draughts my liberty I'll find,
And from the nauseous world set free my mind. *Exit*

At the other end of the stage enter AURENG-ZEBE, DIANET, *and* Attendants. AURENG-ZEBE *turns back and speaks* [*while*] *entering*

AURENG-ZEBE. The lives of all who cease from combat, spare!
My brother's be your most peculiar care.
Our impious use no longer shall obtain;
Brothers no more by brothers shall be slain. (*Seeing* INDAMORA *and* MORAT)
—Ha! do I dream?—Is this my hoped success?
I grow a statue, stiff and motionless.

Look, Dianet—for I dare not trust these eyes.
They dance in mists, and dazzle with surprise.
DIANET. Sir, 'tis Morat; dying he seems, or dead.
And Indamora's hand—
AURENG-ZEBE. (*Sighing*) Supports his head.
Thou shalt not break yet, heart, nor shall she know
My inward torments by my outward show.
To let her see my weakness were too base;
Dissembled quiet sit upon my face.
My sorrow to my eyes no passage find,
But let it inward sink and drown my mind.
Falsehood shall want its triumph. I begin
To stagger, but I'll prop myself within.
The specious tower no ruin shall disclose,
Till down at once the mighty fabric goes.
MORAT. (*To* INDAMORA) In sign that I die yours, reward my love,
And seal my passport to the blest above.
(*Kissing her hand*)
INDAMORA. Oh, stay! or take me with you when you go.
There's nothing now worth living for below.
MORAT. I leave you not, for my expanded mind
Grows up to Heav'n, while it to you is joined.
Not quitting, but enlarged! A blazing fire,
Fed from the brand. (*Dies*)
MELESINDA. Ah me! he's gone!—I die!
(*Swoons*)
INDAMORA. O dismal day!
Fate, thou hast ravished my last hope away!
(*She turns, and sees* AURENG-ZEBE *standing by her, and starts*)
O Heav'n! my Aureng-Zebe—What strange surprise!
Or does my willing mind delude my eyes,
And shows the figure always present there?
—Or liv'st thou? Am I blest and see thee here?
AURENG-ZEBE. (*Turning from her, to her* Attendants) My brother's body see conveyed with care,
Where we may royal sepulture prepare.
With speed to Melesinda bring relief;
Recall her spirits, and moderate her grief.
(*Half turning to* INDAMORA)
—I go, to take forever from your view,
Both the loved object and the hated too.
(*Going away after the bodies, which are carried off*)
INDAMORA. (*Laying hold of him*) Hear me! yet think not that I beg your stay;
I will be heard, and after take your way!
(*He struggles still; she lets him go*)
Go! but your late repentance shall be vain.
I'll never, never see your face again.
(*Turning away*)
AURENG-ZEBE. Madam, I know whatever you can say,
You might be pleased not to command my stay.
All things are yet disordered in the fort;
I must crave leave your audience may be short.
INDAMORA. You need not fear I shall detain you long;
Yet you may tell me your pretended wrong.
AURENG-ZEBE. Is that the bus'ness? then my stay is vain.
INDAMORA. How are you injured?
AURENG-ZEBE. When did I complain?
INDAMORA. Leave off your forced respect,
And show your rage in its most furious form;
I'm armed with innocence to brave the storm.
You heard, perhaps, your brother's last desire,
And after, saw him in my arms expire;
Saw me, with tears, so great a loss bemoan;
Heard me complaining my last hopes were gone.
AURENG-ZEBE. "Oh, stay, or take me with you when you go,
There's nothing now worth living for below."
Unhappy sex! whose beauty is your snare;
Exposed to trials, made too frail to bear.
[*Aside*]
I grow a fool, and show my rage again.
'Tis nature's fault; and why should I complain?
INDAMORA. Will you yet hear me?

AURENG-ZEBE. Yes, till you relate
What powerful motives did your change create.
You thought me dead, and prudently did weigh;
Tears were but vain, and brought but youth's decay.
Then, in Morat, your hopes a crown designed,
And all the woman worked within your mind.
[*Aside*]
I rave again, and to my rage return,
To be again subjected to your scorn.
INDAMORA. I wait till this long storm be over-blown.
AURENG-ZEBE. I'm conscious of my folly: I have done.
I cannot rail, but silently I'll grieve;
—How did I trust! and how did you deceive!
O Arimant, would I had died for thee!
I dearly buy thy generosity.
INDAMORA. Alas! is he then dead?
AURENG-ZEBE. Unknown to me,
He took my arms; and, while I forced my way
Through troops of foes, which did our passage stay,
My buckler o'er my aged father cast,
Still fighting, still defending as I passed,
The noble Arimant usurped my name;
Fought, and took from me, while he gave me, fame.
"To Aureng-Zebe," he made his soldiers cry,
And, seeing not, where he heard danger nigh,
Shot, like a star, through the benighted sky,
A short, but mighty aid—at length he fell.
My own adventures 'twere lost time to tell;
Or how my army, ent'ring in the night,
Surprised our foes—the dark disordered fight—
How my appearance, and my father shown,
Made peace, and all the rightful monarch own.
I've summed it briefly, since it did relate
Th'unwelcome safety of the man you hate.

INDAMORA. As briefly will I clear my innocence;
Your altered brother died in my defence.
Those tears you saw, that tenderness I showed,
Were just effects of grief and gratitude.
He died my convert.
AURENG-ZEBE. —But your lover too;
I heard his words, and did your actions view;
You seemed to mourn another lover dead.
My sighs you gave him, and my tears you shed.
But, worst of all,
Your gratitude for his defence was shown;
It proved you valued life when I was gone.
INDAMORA. Not that I valued life, but feared to die.
Think that my weakness, not inconstancy.
AURENG-ZEBE. Fear showed you doubted of your own intent,
And she who doubts, becomes less innocent.
Tell me not you could fear;
Fear's a large promiser. Who subject live
To that base passion, know not what they give.
No circumstance of grief you did deny—
And what could she give more, who durst not die?
INDAMORA. My love, my faith—
AURENG-ZEBE. Both so adult'rate grown,
When mixed with fear, they never could be known.
I wish no ill might her I love befall,
But she ne'er loved who durst not venture all.
Her life and fame should my concernment be,
But she should only be afraid of me.
INDAMORA. My heart was yours—but, oh! you left it here,
Abandoned to those tyrants, Hope and Fear!
If they forced from me one kind look or word,
Could you not that, not that small part afford?
AURENG-ZEBE. If you had loved, you nothing yours could call;
Giving the least of mine, you gave him all.

True love's a miser—so tenacious grown,
He weighs to the least grain of what's his own;
More delicate than honor's nicest sense,
Neither to give nor take the least offence.
With, or without you, I can have no rest;
What shall I do? y'are lodged within my breast.
Your image never will be thence displaced,
But there it lies—stabbed, mangled, and defaced.

INDAMORA. Yet to restore the quiet of your heart,
There's one way left.

AURENG-ZEBE. —Oh, name it!

INDAMORA. —'Tis to part.
Since perfect bliss with me you cannot prove,
I scorn to bless by halves the man I love.

AURENG-ZEBE. Now you distract me more! Shall then the day
Which views my triumph, see our loves decay?
Must I new bars to my own joy create?
Refuse myself what I had forced from fate?
—What though I am not loved?
Reason's nice taste does our delights destroy;
Brutes are more blest, who grossly feed on joy.

INDAMORA. Such endless jealousies your love pursue,
I can no more be fully blest than you.
I therefore go, to free us both from pain;
I priz'd your person, but your crown disdain.
Nay, even my own—
I give it you; for since I cannot call
Your heart my subject, I'll not reign at all.
Exit

AURENG-ZEBE. Go! Though thou leav'st me tortured on the rack,
'Twixt shame and pride, I cannot call thee back.
—She's guiltless, and I should submit—but oh!
When she exacts it, can I stoop so low?
—Yes, for she's guiltless—but she's haughty too.
Great souls long struggle ere they own a crime.
She's gone—and leaves me no repenting-time.
I'll call her now—sure, if she loves, she'll stay!—
Linger, at least, or not go far away.
(*Looks to the door, and returns*)
Forever lost! and I repent too late.
My foolish pride would set my whole estate,
Till, at one throw, I lost all back to Fate.

[*Enter*] *to him the* EMPEROR, *drawing in* INDAMORA: Attendants

EMPEROR. It must not be, that he by whom we live,
Should no advantage of his gift receive.
Should he be wholly wretched?—he alone,
In this blest day, a day so much his own?
(*To* INDAMORA)
I have not quitted yet a victor's right;
I'll make you happy in your own despite.
I love you still; and if I struggle hard
To give, it shows the worth of the reward.

INDAMORA. Suppose he has o'ercome; must I find place
Among his conquered foes, and sue for grace?
—Be pardoned, and confess I loved not well?
What though none live my innocence to tell,
I know it. Truth may own a gen'rous pride;
I clear myself, and care for none beside.

AURENG-ZEBE. O Indamora, you would break my heart!
Could you resolve, on any terms, to part?
I thought your love eternal; was it tied
So loosely that a quarrel could divide?
I grant that my suspicions were unjust;
But would you leave me for a small distrust?
(*Kneeling to her*)
Forgive those foolish words!
They were the froth my raging folly moved
When it boiled up. I knew not then I loved;
Yet then loved most.

INDAMORA. (*To* AURENG-ZEBE, *giving her hand, smiling*) You would but half be blest!

AURENG-ZEBE. Oh, do but try
My eager love! I'll give myself the lie.
The very hope is a full happiness,
Yet scantly measures what I shall possess.
Fancy itself, even in enjoyment, is
But a dumb judge, and cannot tell its bliss.
EMPEROR. Her eyes a secret yielding do confess,
And promise to partake your happiness.
May all the joys I did myself pursue,
Be raised by her, and multiplied on you!

A procession of Priests, Slaves *following, and last* MELESINDA *in white*

INDAMORA. Alas! what means this pomp?
AURENG-ZEBE. 'Tis the procession of a funeral vow,
Which cruel laws to Indian wives allow,
When fatally their virtue they approve,
Cheerful in flames, and martyrs of their love.
INDAMORA. Oh, my foreboding heart! th'event I fear.
—And see! sad Melesinda does appear.
MELESINDA. You wrong my love; what grief do I betray?
This is the triumph of my nuptial day—
My better nuptials, which, in spite of fate,
Forever join me to my dear Morat.
Now I am pleased; my jealousies are o'er.
He's mine, and I can lose him now no more.
EMPEROR. Let no false show of fame your reason blind.
INDAMORA. You have no right to die; he was not kind.
MELESINDA. Had he been kind, I could no love have shown;
Each vulgar virtue would as much have done.
My love was such, it needed no return,
But could, though he supplied no fuel, burn;
—Rich in itself, like elemental fire,
Whose pureness does no aliment require.
In vain you would bereave me of my lord,
For I will die.—Die is too base a word—
I'll seek his breast, and, kindling by his side,
Adorned with flames, I'll mount a glorious bride. *Exit*

Enter NOURMAHAL, *distracted, with* ZAYDA

ZAYDA. She's lost, she's lost!—But why do I complain
For her who generously did life disdain?
Poisoned, she raves—
Th'envenomed body does the soul attack;
Th'envenomed soul works its own poison back.
NOURMAHAL. I burn—I more than burn! I am all fire!
See, how my mouth and nostrils flame expire![1]
I'll not come near myself.
—Now I'm a burning lake—it rolls and flows;
I'll rush, and pour it all upon my foes.
Pull, pull, that reverend piece of timber near!
Throw't on—'tis dry—'twill burn—
Ha, ha! how my old husband crackles there!
Keep him down, keep him down! turn him about!
I know him—he'll but whiz, and straight go out.
Fan me, you winds—what, not one breath of air?
I'll burn 'em all, and yet have flames to spare.
Quench me! Pour on whole rivers.—'Tis in vain;
Morat stands there to drive them back again.
With those huge bellows in his hands, he blows
New fire into my head. My brain-pan glows.
See! see! there's Aureng-Zebe, too, takes his part,
But he blows all his fire into my heart.
AURENG-ZEBE. Alas! what fury's this?
NOURMAHAL. (*Staring upon him, and catching at him*) That's he, that's he!
I know the dear man's voice—
And this my rival, this the cursed she.
They kiss; into each other's arms they run.
Close, close, close!—Must I see, and must have none?

[1] exhale.

—Thou art not hers! Give me that eager kiss.
Ungrateful! have I lost Morat for this?
Will you?—before my face?—Poor helpless I,
See all, and have my hell before I die!
(*Sinks down*)

EMPEROR. With thy last breath thou hast thy crimes confessed;
Farewell! and take, what thou ne'er gav'st me—rest.
But you, my son, receive it better here;
(*Giving him* INDAMORA'S *hand*)
The just rewards of love and honor wear.
Receive the mistress you so long have served;
Receive the crown your loyalty preserved.
Take you the reins, while I from cares remove,
And sleep within the chariot which I drove.
Exeunt

EPILOGUE

A pretty task! and so I told the fool,
Who needs would undertake to please by rule.
He thought that if his characters were good,
The scenes entire, and free from noise and blood;
The action great, yet circumscribed by time,
The words not forced, but sliding into rhyme;
The passions raised, and calm by just degrees,
As tides are swelled, and then retire to seas—
He thought, in hitting these, his bus'ness done,
Though he, perhaps, has failed in ev'ry one.
But, after all, a poet must confess,
His art's like physic—but a happy guess.
Your pleasure on your fancy must depend;
The lady's pleased, just as she likes her friend.

"No song! no dance! no show!" he fears you'll say:
You love all naked beauties but a play.
He much mistakes your methods to delight;
And, like the French, abhors our target-fight:
But those damned dogs can ne'er be in the right.
True English hate your Monsieur's paltry arts,
For you are all silk-weavers in your hearts.
Bold Britons, at a brave Bear-Garden fray,
Are roused: and clattering sticks cry,—"Play, play, play!"
Meantime, your filthy foreigner will stare,
And mutters to himself,—*Ha! gens barbare!*
And, gad, 'tis well he mutters—well for him;
Our butchers else would tear him limb from limb.
'Tis true, the time may come, your sons may be
Infected with this French civility;
But this, in after ages will be done—
Our poet writes a hundred years too soon.
This age comes on too slow, or he too fast,
And early springs are subject to a blast!
Who would excel, when few can make a test
Betwixt indiff'rent writing and the best?
For favors, cheap and common, who would strive,
Which, like abandoned prostitutes, you give?
Yet, scattered here and there, I some behold,
Who can discern the tinsel from the gold:
To these he writes; and, if by them allowed,
'Tis their prerogative to rule the crowd,
For he more fears, like a presuming man,
Their votes who cannot judge than theirs who can.

ALL FOR LOVE; OR, THE WORLD WELL LOST

A Tragedy by John Dryden

Facile est verbum aliquod ardens (ut ita dicam) notare, idque restinctis animorum incendiis irridere

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Marc Antony[1]
Ventidius, his general
Dollabella, his friend
Alexas, the Queen's eunuch
Serapion, priest of Isis
[Myris,] another priest
Servants to Antony

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt
Octavia, Antony's wife
Charmion, Iras } Cleopatra's maids
Antony's two little daughters

Scene: *Alexandria*

[Time: 30 b.c.]

[THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY]

To the Right Honorable Thomas, Earl of Danby, Viscount Latimer, and Baron Osborne of Kiveton, in Yorkshire; Lord High Treasurer of England, one of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, &c.

My Lord,

The gratitude of poets is so troublesome a virtue to great men that you are often in danger of your own benefits; for you are threatened with some epistle, and not suffered to do good in quiet, or to compound for their silence whom you have obliged. Yet, I confess, I neither am nor ought to be surprised at this indulgence; for your Lordship has the same right to favor poetry which the great and noble have ever had.

Carmen amat, quisquis carmine digna gerit.

There is somewhat of a tie in nature betwixt those who are born for worthy actions, and those who can transmit them to posterity; and though ours be much the inferior part, it comes at least within the verge of alliance; nor are we unprofitable members of the commonwealth, when we animate others to those virtues which we copy and describe from you.

'Tis indeed their interest, who endeavor the subversion of governments, to discourage poets and historians; for the best which can happen to them is to be forgotten. But such who under kings are the fathers of their country, and by a just and prudent ordering of affairs preserve it, have the same reason to cherish the chroniclers of their actions, as they have to lay up in safety the deeds and evidences of their estates; for such records are their undoubted titles to the love and reverence of after ages. Your Lordship's administration has already taken up a considerable part of the English annals; and many of its most happy years are owing to it. His Majesty, the most knowing judge of men, and the best master, has acknowledged the ease and benefit he receives in the incomes of his treasury, which you found not only disordered, but exhausted. All things were in the confusion of a chaos, without form or method, if not reduced beyond it, even to annihilation; so that you had not only to separate the jarring elements, but (if that boldness of expression might be allowed me) to create them. Your enemies had so embroiled the management of your office, that they looked on your advancement as the instrument of your ruin. And as if the clogging of the revenue, and the confusion of accounts, which you found in your entrance, were not sufficient, they added their own weight of malice to the public calamity, by forestalling the credit which should cure it. Your friends on the other side were only

1 Q1 *Anthony* or *Antony*.

capable of pitying, but not of aiding you. No farther help or counsel was remaining to you, but what was founded on yourself; and that indeed was your security; for your diligence, your constancy, and your prudence, wrought more surely within when they were not disturbed by any outward motion. The highest virtue is best to be trusted with itself, for assistance only can be given by a genius superior to that which it assists, and 'tis the noblest kind of debt when we are only obliged to God and nature. This then, my Lord, is your just commendation, that you have wrought out yourself a way to glory by those very means that were designed for your destruction; you have not only restored but advanced the revenues of your master, without grievance to the subject; and as if that were little yet, the debts of the exchequer, which lay heaviest both on the Crown and on private persons, have by your conduct been established in a certainty of satisfaction—an action so much the more great and honorable, because the case was without the ordinary relief of laws, above the hopes of the afflicted, and beyond the narrowness of the treasury to redress, had it been managed by a less able hand. 'Tis certainly the happiest and most unenvied part of all your fortune, to do good to many, while you do injury to none; to receive at once the prayers of the subject and the praises of the prince; and, by the care of your conduct, to give him means of exerting the chiefest (if any be the chiefest) of his royal virtues—his distributive justice to the deserving, and his bounty and compassion to the wanting. The disposition of princes towards their people cannot better be discovered than in the choice of their ministers, who, like the animal spirits betwixt the soul and body, participate somewhat of both natures, and make the communication which is betwixt them. A king who is just and moderate in his nature, who rules according to the laws, whom God made happy by forming the temper of his soul to the constitution of his government, and who makes us happy by assuming over us no other sovereignty than that wherein our welfare and liberty consists; a prince, I say, of so excellent a character, and so suitable to the wishes of all good men, could not better have conveyed himself into his people's apprehensions than in your Lordship's person, who so lively express the same virtues that you seem not so much a copy as an emanation of him. Moderation is doubtless an establishment of greatness, but there is a steadiness of temper which is likewise requisite in a minister of state—so equal a mixture of both virtues, that he may stand like an isthmus betwixt the two encroaching seas of arbitrary power and lawless anarchy. The undertaking would be difficult to any but an extraordinary genius to stand at the line and to divide the limits; to pay what is due to the great representative of the nation, and neither to enhance nor to yield up the undoubted prerogatives of the Crown. These, my Lord, are the proper virtues of a noble Englishman, as indeed they are properly English virtues, no people in the world being capable of using them but we who have the happiness to be born under so equal and so well-poised a government—a government which has all the advantages of liberty beyond a commonwealth, and all the marks of kingly sovereignty without the danger of a tyranny. Both my nature, as I am an Englishman, and my reason, as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name of a republic—that mock-appearance of a liberty, where all who have not part in the government are slaves, and slaves they are of a viler note than such as are subjects to an absolute dominion. For no Christian monarchy is so absolute but 'tis circumscribed with laws; but when the executive power is in the law-makers, there is no farther check upon them, and the people must suffer without a remedy, because they are oppressed by their representatives. If I must serve, the number of my masters who were born my equals, would but add to the ignominy of my bondage. The nature of our government, above all others, is exactly suited both to the situation of our country and the temper of the natives, an island being more proper for commerce and for defence than for extending its dominions on the Continent; for what the valor of its inhabitants might gain, by reason of its remoteness and the casualties of the seas, it could not so easily preserve; and therefore neither the arbitrary power of one in a monarchy, nor of many in a commonwealth, could make us greater than we are. 'Tis true that vaster and more frequent taxes might be gathered when the consent of the people was not asked or needed; but this were only by conquering abroad to be poor at home, and the examples of our neighbors teach us that they are not always the happiest subjects whose kings extend their dominions farthest. Since therefore we cannot win by an offensive war, at least a land war, the model of our government seems naturally contrived for

the defensive part; and the consent of a people is easily obtained to contribute to that power which must protect it. *Felices nimium, bona si sua nôrint, Angligenæ!* And yet there are not wanting malcontents amongst us, who, surfeiting themselves on too much happiness, would persuade the people that they might be happier by a change. 'Twas indeed the policy of their old forefather, when himself was fallen from the station of glory, to seduce mankind into the same rebellion with him, by telling him he might yet be freer than he was—that is, more free than his nature would allow, or (if I may so say) than God could make him. We have already all the liberty which free-born subjects can enjoy, and all beyond it is but license. But if it be liberty of conscience which they pretend, the moderation of our church is such that its practice extends not to the severity of persecution, and its discipline is withal so easy, that it allows more freedom to dissenters than any of the sects would allow to it. In the meantime, what right can be pretended by these men to attempt innovations in church or state? Who made them the trustees, or (to speak a little nearer their own language) the keepers of the liberty of England? If their call be extraordinary, let them convince us by working miracles; for ordinary vocation they can have none, to disturb the government under which they were born, and which protects them. He who has often changed his party, and always has made his interest the rule of it, gives little evidence of his sincerity for the public good; 'tis manifest he changes but for himself, and takes the people for tools to work his fortune. Yet the experience of all ages might let him know that they who trouble the waters first, have seldom the benefit of the fishing, as they who began the late rebellion enjoyed not the fruit of their undertaking, but were crushed themselves by the usurpation of their own instruments. Neither is it enough for them to answer, that they only intend a reformation of the government, but not the subversion of it; on such pretence all insurrections have been founded; 'tis striking at the root of power, which is obedience. Every remonstrance of private men has the seed of treason in it, and discourses which are couched in ambiguous terms are therefore the more dangerous, because they do all the mischief of open sedition yet are safe from the punishment of the laws. These, my Lord, are considerations which I should not pass so lightly over, had I room to manage them as they deserve; for no man can be so inconsiderable in a nation as not to have a share in the welfare of it, and if he be a true Englishman, he must at the same time be fired with indignation, and revenge himself as he can on the disturbers of his country. And to whom could I more fitly apply myself than to your Lordship, who have not only an inborn, but an hereditary, loyalty? The memorable constancy and sufferings of your father, almost to the ruin of his estate, for the royal cause, were an earnest of that which such a parent and such an institution would produce in the person of a son. But so unhappy an occasion of manifesting your own zeal in suffering for his present Majesty, the providence of God and the prudence of your administration will, I hope, prevent. That as your father's fortune waited on the unhappiness of his sovereign, so your own may participate of the better fate which attends his son. The relation which you have by alliance to the noble family of your lady, serves to confirm to you both this happy augury. For what can deserve a greater place in the English chronicle than the loyalty and courage, the actions and death, of the general of an army, fighting for his prince and country? The honor and gallantry of the Earl of Lindsey is so illustrious a subject, that 'tis fit to adorn an heroic poem; for he was the protomartyr of the cause, and the type of his unfortunate royal master.

Yet after all, my Lord, if I may speak my thoughts, you are happy rather to us than to yourself; for the multiplicity, the cares, and the vexations of your employment, have betrayed you from yourself, and given you up into the possession of the public. You are robbed of your privacy and friends, and scarce any hour of your life you can call your own. Those who envy your fortune, if they wanted not good nature, might more justly pity it; and when they see you watched by a crowd of suitors, whose importunity 'tis impossible to avoid, would conclude with reason that you have lost much more in true content than you have gained by dignity, and that a private gentleman is better attended by a single servant than your Lordship with so clamorous a train. Pardon me, my Lord, if I speak like a philosopher on this subject; the fortune which makes a man uneasy cannot make him happy, and a wise man must think himself uneasy when few of his actions are in his choice.

This last consideration has brought me to another, and a very seasonable one for your relief; which is, that while I pity your want of leisure,

I have impertinently detained you so long a time. I have put off my own business, which was my dedication, till 'tis so late that I am now ashamed to begin it; and therefore I will say nothing of the poem which I present to you, because I know not if you are like to have an hour which, with a good conscience, you may throw away in perusing it; and for the author, I have only to beg the continuance of your protection to him, who is,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obliged,
Most humble, and most
Obedient servant,
John Dryden

PREFACE

The death of Antony and Cleopatra is a subject which has been treated by the greatest wits of our nation, after Shakespeare; and by all so variously, that their example has given me the confidence to try myself in this bow of Ulysses amongst the crowd of suitors; and, withal, to take my own measures in aiming at the mark. I doubt not but the same motive has prevailed with all of us in this attempt, I mean the excellency of the moral; for the chief persons represented were famous patterns of unlawful love, and their end accordingly was unfortunate. All reasonable men have long since concluded that the hero of the poem ought not to be a character of perfect virtue, for then he could not without injustice be made unhappy; nor yet altogether wicked, because he could not then be pitied. I have therefore steered the middle course, and have drawn the character of Antony as favorably as Plutarch, Appian, and Dion Cassius would give me leave; the like I have observed in Cleopatra. That which is wanting to work up the pity to a greater height[1] was not afforded me by the story; for the crimes of love which they both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity, or fatal ignorance, but were wholly voluntary; since our passions are, or ought to be, within our power. The fabric of the play is regular enough as to the inferior parts of it, and the unities of time, place and action, more exactly observed than, perhaps, the English theater requires. Particularly, the action is so much one that it is the only of the kind without episode or underplot, every scene in the tragedy conducing to the main design and every act concluding with a turn of it. The greatest error in the contrivance seems to be in the person of Octavia; for, though I might use the privilege of a poet to introduce her into Alexandria, yet I had not enough considered that the compassion she moved to herself and children was destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra, whose mutual love being founded upon vice, must lessen the favor of the audience to them, when virtue and innocence were oppressed by it. And though I justified Antony in some measure by making Octavia's departure to proceed wholly from herself, yet the force of the first machine[1] still remained; and the dividing of pity, like the cutting of a river into many channels, abated the strength of the natural stream. But this is an objection which none of my critics have urged against me; and therefore I might have let it pass, if I could have resolved to have been partial to myself. The faults my enemies have found are rather cavils concerning little and not essential decencies, which a master of the ceremonies may decide betwixt us. The French poets, I confess, are strict observers of these punctilios; they would not, for example, have suffered Cleopatra and Octavia to have met, or, if they had met, there must only have passed betwixt them some cold civilities, but no eagerness of repartée, for fear of offending against the greatness of their characters and the modesty of their sex. This objection I foresaw and at the same time contemned; for I judged it both natural and probable that Octavia, proud of her new gained conquest, would search out Cleopatra to triumph over her; and that Cleopatra, thus attacked, was not of a spirit to shun the encounter; and 'tis not unlikely that two exasperated rivals should use such satire as I have put into their mouths; for after all, though the one were a Roman and the other a queen, they were both women. 'Tis true, some actions, though natural, are not fit to be represented, and broad obscenities in words ought in good manners to be avoided; expressions, therefore, are a modest clothing of our thoughts, as breeches and petticoats are of our bodies. If I have kept myself within the bounds of modesty, all beyond it is but nicety and affectation, which is no more but modesty depraved into a vice; they betray themselves who are too quick of apprehension in such cases, and leave all

1 Q1 *heighth.*

1 dramatic motive.

reasonable men to imagine worse of them than of the poet.

Honest Montaigne goes yet farther: *Nous ne sommes que ceremonie; la ceremonie nous emporte, et laissons la substance des choses. Nous nous tenons aux branches, et abandonnons le tronc et le corps. Nous avons appris aux dames de rougir, oyan*[*t*]*s seulement nommer ce qu'elles ne craignent aucunement a faire; nous n'osons appeller a droict nos membres, et ne craignons pas de les employer a toute sorte de debauche. La ceremonie nous defend d'exprimer par paroles les choses licites et naturelles, et nous l'en croyons; la raison nous defend de n'en faire point d'illicites et mauvaises, et personne ne l'en croit.* My comfort is that by this opinion my enemies are but sucking critics, who would fain be nibbling ere their teeth are come.

Yet in this nicety of manners does the excellency of French poetry consist; their heroes are the most civil people breathing, but their good breeding seldom extends to a word of sense. All their wit is in their ceremony; they want the genius which animates our stage, and therefore 'tis but necessary, when they cannot please, that they should take care not to offend. But as the civilest man in the company is commonly the dullest, so these authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners make you sleep. They are so careful not to exasperate a critic that they never leave him any work; so busy with the broom, and make so clean a riddance, that there is little left either for censure or for praise. For no part of a poem is worth our discommending where the whole is insipid; as when we have once tasted of palled[1] wine, we stay not to examine it glass by glass. But while they affect to shine in trifles, they are often careless in essentials. Thus, their Hippolitus[2] is so scrupulous in point of decency that he will rather expose himself to death than accuse his stepmother to his father, and my critics, I am sure, will commend him for it: but we of grosser apprehensions are apt to think that this excess of generosity is not practicable but with fools and madmen. This was good manners with a vengeance, and the audience is like to be much concerned at the misfortunes of this admirable hero; but take Hippolitus out of his poetic fit, and I suppose he would think it a wiser part to set the saddle on the right horse, and choose rather to live with the reputation of a plain-spoken, honest man, than to die with the infamy of an incestuous villain. In the meantime we may take notice, that where the poet ought to have preserved the character as it was delivered to us by antiquity, when he should have given us the picture of a rough young man of the Amazonian strain, a jolly huntsman, and both by his profession and his early rising a mortal enemy to love, he has chosen to give him the turn of gallantry, sent him to travel from Athens to Paris, taught him to make love, and transformed the Hippolitus of Euripides into Monsieur Hippolite. I should not have troubled myself thus far with French poets, but that I find our *Chedreux*[3] critics wholly form their judgments by them. But for my part, I desire to be tried by the laws of my own country, for it seems unjust to me that the French should prescribe here, till they have conquered. Our little sonneteers who follow them, have too narrow souls to judge of poetry. Poets themselves are the most proper, though I conclude not the only critics. But till some genius as universal as Aristotle shall arise, one who can penetrate into all arts and sciences without the practice of them, I shall think it reasonable that the judgment of an artificer in his own art should be preferable to the opinion of another man, at least where he is not bribed by interest or prejudiced by malice; and this, I suppose, is manifest by plain induction. For first the crowd cannot be presumed to have more than a gross instinct of what pleases or displeases them: every man will grant me this; but then, by a particular kindness to himself, he draws[4] his own stake first, and will be distinguished from the multitude, of which other men may think him one. But, if I come closer to those who are allowed for witty men, either by the advantage of their quality or by common fame, and affirm that neither are they qualified to decide sovereignly concerning poetry, I shall yet have a strong party of my opinion; for most of them severally will exclude the rest, either from the number of witty men, or at least of able judges. But here again they are all indulgent to themselves, and everyone who believes himself a wit—that is, every man—will pretend at the same time to a right of judging. But to press it yet farther, there are many witty men, but few poets; neither have

1 vapid. 2 In Racine's *Phèdre*. 3 Cf. p. 51, l. 307. 4 withdraws (in gaming).

all poets a taste of tragedy. And this is the rock on which they are daily splitting. Poetry, which is a picture of nature, must generally please, but 'tis not to be understood that all parts of it must please every man; therefore is not tragedy to be judged by a witty man, whose taste is only confined to comedy. Nor is every man who loves tragedy a sufficient judge of it; he must understand the excellencies of it too, or he will only prove a blind admirer, not a critic. From hence it comes that so many satires on poets and censures of their writings, fly abroad. Men of pleasant conversation (at least esteemed so) and indued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out with some smattering of Latin, are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the herd of gentlemen by their poetry.

Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illâ Fortunâ.

And is not this a wretched affectation, not to be contented with what fortune has done for them, and sit down quietly with their estates, but they must call their wits in question, and needlessly expose their nakedness to public view, not considering that they are not to expect the same approbation from sober men which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle? If a little glittering in discourse has passed them on us for witty men, where was the necessity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an estate, but yet is in possession of it, would he bring it of his own accord to be tried at Westminster? We who write, if we want the talent, yet have the excuse that we do it for a poor subsistence; but what can be urged in their defence, who not having the vocation of poverty to scribble, out of mere wantonness take pains to make themselves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right, where he said that *no man is satisfied with his condition.* A poet is not pleased because he is not rich, and the rich are discontented because the poets will not admit them of their number. Thus the case is hard with writers: if they succeed not, they must starve; and if they do, some malicious satire is prepared to level them for daring to please without their leave. But while they are so eager to destroy the fame of others, their ambition is manifest in their concernment: some poem of their own is to be produced, and the slaves are to be laid flat with their faces on the ground, that the monarch may appear in the greater majesty.

Dionysius and Nero had the same longings, but with all their power they could never bring their business well about. 'Tis true, they proclaimed themselves poets by sound of trumpet; and poets they were, upon pain of death to any man who durst call them otherwise. The audience had a fine time on't, you may imagine; they sate in a bodily fear, and looked as demurely as they could, for 'twas a hanging matter to laugh unseasonably; and the tyrants were suspicious, as they had reason, that their subjects had 'em in the wind: so every man in his own defence set as good a face upon the business as he could. 'Twas known beforehand that the monarchs were to be crowned laureats; but when the show was over, and an honest man was suffered to depart quietly, he took out his laughter which he had stifled, with a firm resolution never more to see an emperor's play, though he had been ten years a making it. In the meantime the true poets were they who made the best markets; for they had wit enough to yield the prize with a good grace, and not contend with him who had thirty legions. They were sure to be rewarded, if they confessed themselves bad writers, and that was somewhat better than to be martyrs for their reputation. Lucan's example was enough to teach them manners; and after he was put to death for overcoming Nero, the emperor carried it without dispute for the best poet in his dominions; no man was ambitious of that grinning honor; for if he heard the malicious trumpeter proclaiming his name before his betters, he knew there was but one way with him. Mæcenas took another course, and we know he was more than a great man, for he was witty too; but finding himself far gone in poetry, which Seneca assures us was not his talent, he thought it his best way to be well with Virgil and with Horace, that at least he might be a poet at the second hand. And we see how happily it has succeeded with him; for his own bad poetry is forgotten, and their panegyrics of him still remain. But they who should be our patrons are for no such expensive ways to fame; they have much of the poetry of Mæcenas, but little of his liberality. They are for persecuting Horace and Virgil, in the persons of their successors (for such is every man who has any part of their soul and fire, though in a less degree). Some of their little zanies[1] yet go farther; for they are persecutors even of Horace himself, as far as they are able, by their ignorant and

[1] simpletons.

vile imitations of him, by making an unjust use of his authority, and turning his artillery against his friends. But how would he disdain to be copied by such hands! I dare answer for him, he would be more uneasy in their company than he was with Crispinus, their forefather, in the Holy Way; and would no more have allowed them a place amongst the critics than he would Demetrius the mimic and Tigellius the buffoon:

. . . Demetri, teq; Tigelli,
Discipulorum[1] *inter jubeo plorare cathedras.*

With what scorn would he look down on such miserable translators, who make doggrel of his Latin, mistake his meaning, misapply his censures, and often contradict their own? He is fixed as a landmark to set out the bounds of poetry:

Saxum antiquum ingens, . . .
Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

But other arms than theirs and other sinews are required to raise the weight of such an author; and when they would toss him against their enemies,

Genua labant, gelidus concrevit frigore sanguis;
Tum lapis ipse viri vacuum per inane volutus
Nec spatium evasit totum, neque pertulit ictum.

For my part, I would wish no other revenge, either for myself or the rest of the poets, from this rhyming judge of the twelve-penny gallery, this legitimate son of Sternhold, than that he would subscribe his name to his censure, or (not to tax him beyond his learning) set his mark; for should he own himself publicly, and come from behind the lion's skin, they whom he condemns would be thankful to him, they whom he praises would choose to be condemned; and the magistrates whom he has elected, would modestly withdraw from their employment, to avoid the scandal of his nomination. The sharpness of his satire, next to himself, falls most heavily on his friends, and they ought never to forgive him for commending them perpetually the wrong way, and sometimes by contraries. If he have a friend whose hastiness in writing is his greatest fault, Horace would have taught him to have minced the matter, and to have called it readiness of thought and a flowing fancy; for friendship will allow a man to christen an imperfection by the name of some neighbor virtue:

Vellem in amicitiâ sic erraremus, et isti
Errori nomen virtus posuisset honestum.

But he would never have allowed him to have called a slow man hasty, or a hasty writer a slow drudge, as Juvenal explains it:

. . . Canibus pigris scabieqe vetusta
Levibus et siccæ lambentibus ora lucernæ,
Nomen erit pardus, tygris, leo, si quid adhuc est
Quod fremit in terris violentius.

Yet Lucretius laughs at a foolish lover, even for excusing the imperfections of his mistress:

Nigra melichrus *est, immunda et fetida* acosmos,
Balba loqui non quit, traulizei; *muta pudens est, &c.*

But to drive it *ad Ethiopem cygnum* is not to be endured. I leave him to interpret this by the benefit of his French version on the other side, and without further considering him than I have the rest of my illiterate censors, whom I have disdained to answer because they are not qualified for judges. It remains that I acquaint the reader that I have endeavored in this play to follow the practice of the ancients, who, as Mr. Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters. Horace likewise gives it for a rule in his Art of Poetry:

. . . Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.

Yet, though their models are regular, they are too little for English tragedy, which requires to be built in a larger compass. I could give an instance in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, which was the masterpiece of Sophocles; but I reserve it for a more fit occasion, which I hope to have hereafter. In my style I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare, which, that I might perform more freely, I have disencumbered myself from rhyme. Not that I condemn my former way, but that this is more proper to my present purpose. I hope I need not to explain myself, that I have not copied my author servilely; words and phrases must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages, but 'tis almost a miracle that much of his language remains so pure, and that he who began dramatic poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and as Ben Jonson tells us, without learning,

[1] Horace has *discipularum.*

should by the force of his own genius perform so much that in a manner he has left no praise for any who come after him. The occasion is fair, and the subject would be pleasant, to handle the difference of styles betwixt him and Fletcher, and wherein and how far they are both to be imitated. But, since I must not be over-confident of my own performance after him, it will be prudence in me to be silent. Yet I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that by imitating him I have excelled myself throughout the play; and particularly, that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius in the first act to anything which I have written in this kind.

PROLOGUE

What flocks of critics hover here to-day,
As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
All gaping for the carcass of a play!
With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
And follow dying poets by the scent.
Ours gives himself for gone; y'have watched your time!
He fights this day unarmed—without his rhyme;
And brings a tale which often has been told,
As sad as Dido's and almost as old.
His hero, whom you wits his "bully" call,
Bates of his mettle and scarce rants at all:
He's somewhat lewd, but a well-meaning mind;
Weeps much; fights little; but is wond'rous kind.
In short, a pattern and companion fit
For all the keeping tonies[1] of the pit.
I could name more: a wife, and mistress too;
Both (to be plain) too good for most of you:
The wife well-natured, and the mistress true.
Now, poets, if your fame has been his care,
Allow him all the candor you can spare.
A brave man scorns to quarrel once a day,
Like Hectors[2] in at every petty fray.
Let those find fault whose wit's so very small,
They've need to show that they can think at all;
Errors like straws upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls must dive below.
Fops may have leave to level all they can,
As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.
Half-wits are fleas; so little and so light,
We scarce could know they live, but that they bite.
But, as the rich, when tired with daily feasts,
For change become their next poor tenants' guests;
Drink hearty draughts of ale from plain brown bowls,
And snatch the homely rasher from the coals:
So you, retiring from much better cheer,
For once may venture to do penance here.
And since that plenteous autumn now is past,
Whose grapes and peaches have indulged your taste,
Take in good part, from our poor poet's board,
Such rivelled[3] fruits as winter can afford.

1 fools. 2 ruffians.

ACT I

SCENE.[4] *The Temple of Isis*

Enter SERAPION, MYRIS, [*and*] Priests of Isis

SERAPION. Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent
That they have lost their name. Our fruitful Nile
Flowed ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected and so wondrous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Ev'n of the hinds that watched it: men and beasts
Were born above the tops of trees that grew
On th'utmost margin of the water-mark.
Then, with so swift an ebb the flood drove backward,

3 wrinkled. 4 The same throughout.

It slipped from underneath the scaly herd;
Here monstrous phocæ[1] panted on the shore;
Forsaken dolphins there, with their broad tails,
Lay lashing the departing waves; hard by 'em,
Sea-horses flound'ring in the slimy mud,
Tossed up their heads, and dashed the ooze about 'em.

Enter ALEXAS *behind them*

MYRIS. Avert these omens, Heav'n!
SERAPION. Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
In a lone aisle o'th' temple while I walked,
A whirlwind rose, that with a violent blast
Shook all the dome: the doors around me clapped;
The iron wicket that defends the vault
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclosed the mighty dead.
From out each monument, in order placed,
An armed ghost start up: the boy-king last
Reared his inglorious head. A peal of groans
Then followed, and a lamentable voice
Cried, "Egypt is no more." My blood ran back;
My shaking knees against each other knocked;
On the cold pavement down I fell entranced,
And so unfinished left the horrid scene.
ALEXAS. (*Showing himself*) And dreamed you this? or did invent the story,
To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
And train 'em up betimes in fear of priesthood?
SERAPION. My lord, I saw you not,
Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
I uttered was most true.
ALEXAS. A foolish dream,
Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts
And holy luxury.
SERAPION. I know my duty;
This goes no farther.
ALEXAS. 'Tis not fit it should.
Nor would the times now bear it, were it true.

All southern from yon hills, the Roman camp
Hangs o'er us black and threat'ning, like a storm
Just breaking on our heads.
SERAPION. Our faint Egyptians pray for Antony;
But in their servile hearts they own Octavius.
MYRIS. Why then does Antony dream out his hours,
And tempts not fortune for a noble day,
Which might redeem what Actium lost?
ALEXAS. He thinks 'tis past recovery.
SERAPION. Yet the foe
Seems not to press the siege.
ALEXAS. Oh, there's the wonder.
Mæcenas and Agrippa, who can most
With Cæsar, are his foes. His wife Octavia,
Driv'n from his house, solicits her revenge;
And Dollabella, who was once his friend,
Upon some private grudge now seeks his ruin;
Yet still war seems on either side to sleep.
SERAPION. 'Tis strange that Antony for some days past
Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra;
But here, in Isis temple, lives retired,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.
ALEXAS. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by absence
To cure his mind of love.
SERAPION. If he be vanquishèd,
Or make his peace, Egypt is doomed to be
A Roman province; and our plenteous harvests
Must then redeem the scarceness of their soil.
While Antony stood firm, our Alexandria
Rivalled proud Rome (dominion's other seat),
And Fortune, striding like a vast Colossus,
Could fix an equal foot of empire here.
ALEXAS. Had I my wish, these tyrants of all nature
Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish,—perish
Each by the other's sword; but, since our will
Is lamely followed by our pow'r, we must
Depend on one, with him to rise or fall.

[1] seals.

SERAPION. How stands the queen affected?
ALEXAS. Oh, she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquished man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey, to his pursuers' hands,
She might preserve us all; but 'tis in vain—
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here,
Whom I could wish divided from her arms
Far as the earth's deep center. Well, you know
The state of things; no more of your ill omens
And black prognostics; labor to confirm[1]
The people's hearts.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *talking aside with a* Gentleman of ANTONY'S

SERAPION. These Romans will o'erhear us.
But who's that stranger? By his warlike port,
His fierce demeanor, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.
ALEXAS. Oh, 'tis Ventidius,
Our emp'ror's great lieutenant in the East,
Who first showed Rome that Parthia could be conquered.
When Antony returned from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.
SERAPION. You seem to know him well.
ALEXAS. Too well. I saw him in Cilicia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony;
A mortal foe he was to us, and Egypt.
But, let me witness to the worth I hate,
A braver Roman never drew a sword.
Firm to his prince; but as a friend, not slave.
He ne'er was of his pleasures, but presides
O'er all his cooler hours and morning counsels;
In short, the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue
Of an old true-stamped Roman lives in him.

1 strengthen.

His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw, to mark him better;
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.

(*They withdraw to a corner of the stage; and* VENTIDIUS, *with the other, comes forwards to the front*)

VENTIDIUS. Not see him, say you?
I say, I must and will.
GENTLEMAN. He has commanded,
On pain of death none should approach his presence.
VENTIDIUS. I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.
GENTLEMAN. He sees not Cleopatra.
VENTIDIUS. Would he had never seen her!
GENTLEMAN. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of any thing, but thought; or, if he talks,
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving;
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass;
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, "Take all,
The world's not worth my care."
VENTIDIUS. Just, just his nature.
Virtue's his path; but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul; and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills.
But when his danger makes him find his fault,
Quick to observe and full of sharp remorse,
He censures eagerly[2] his own misdeeds,
Judging himself with malice to himself,
And not forgiving what as a man he did,
Because his other parts are more than man.
He must not thus be lost.

(ALEXAS *and the* Priests *come forward*)

ALEXAS. You have your full instructions, now advance;
Proclaim your orders loudly.
SERAPION. Romans, Egyptians, hear the queen's command.

2 keenly.

Thus Cleopatra bids: "Let labor cease,
To pomp and triumphs give this happy day,
That gave the world a lord: 'tis Antony's."
Live, Antony; and Cleopatra live!
Be this the general voice sent up to Heav'n,
And every public place repeat this echo.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) Fine pageantry!
SERAPION. Set out before your doors
The images of all your sleeping fathers,
With laurels crowned; with laurels wreathe your posts,
And strow with flow'rs the pavement; let the priests
Do present sacrifice; pour out the wine,
And call the gods to join with you in gladness.
VENTIDIUS. Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy!
Can they be friends of Antony, who revel
When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame,
You Romans, your great grandsires' images,
For fear their souls should animate their marbles,
To blush at their degenerate progeny.
ALEXAS. A love which knows no bounds to Antony,
Would mark the day with honors when all Heaven
Labored for him, when each propitious star
Stood wakeful in his orb to watch that hour,
And shed his better influence. Her own birthday
Our queen neglected, like a vulgar fate
That passed obscurely by.
VENTIDIUS. Would it had slept,
Divided far from his; till some remote
And future age had called it out, to ruin
Some other prince, not him.
ALEXAS. Your emperor,
Tho' grown unkind, would be more gentle than
T'upbraid my queen for loving him too well.
VENTIDIUS. Does the mute sacrifice upbraid the priest?
He knows him not his executioner.
Oh, she has decked his ruin with her love,
Led him in golden bands to gaudy slaughter,
And made perdition pleasing; she has left him
The blank of what he was;
I tell thee, eunuch, she has quite unmanned him.
Can any Roman see, and know him now,
Thus altered from the lord of half mankind,
Unbent, unsinewed, made a woman's toy,
Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honors,
And cramped within a corner of the world?
O Antony!
Thou bravest soldier and thou best of friends!
Bounteous as nature; next to nature's God!
Couldst thou but make new worlds, so wouldst thou give 'em,
As bounty were thy being. Rough in battle
As the first Romans when they went to war;
Yet after victory more pitiful
Than all their praying virgins left at home!
ALEXAS. Would you could add to those more shining virtues,
His truth to her who loves him.
VENTIDIUS. Would I could not!
But wherefore waste I precious hours with thee?
Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
Antony's other fate. Go, tell thy queen
Ventidius is arrived to end her charms.
Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone;
Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
You dare not fight for Antony; go pray,
And keep your coward's-holy-day in temples.

Exeunt ALEXAS, SERAPION

Re-enter the Gentlemen *of* ANTONY

2D GENTLEMAN. The emperor approaches, and commands,
On pain of death, that none presume to stay.
1ST GENTLEMAN. (*Going out with the other*) I dare not disobey him.
VENTIDIUS. Well, I dare.
But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
Which way his humor drives; the rest I'll venture. (*Withdraws*)

Enter ANTONY, *walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks*

ANTONY. They tell me, 'tis my birthday, and I'll keep it
With double pomp of sadness.
'Tis what the day deserves which gave me breath.
Why was I raised the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travelled,
Till all my fires were spent; and then cast downward
To be trod out by Cæsar?
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) On my soul,
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!
ANTONY. Count thy gains.
Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this?
Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
Has starved thy wanting age.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) How sorrow shakes him!
So, now the tempest tears him up by th'roots,
And on the ground extends the noble ruin.
(ANTONY *having thrown himself down*)
ANTONY. Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor;
The place thou pressest on thy mother earth
Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee:
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it),
Octavia then will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widowed hand to Cæsar;
Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,
To see his rival of the universe
Lie still and peaceful there. I'll think no more on't.
Give me some music; look that it be sad.
I'll soothe my melancholy, till I swell
And burst myself with sighing.—
(*Soft music*)
'Tis somewhat to my humor. Stay, I fancy
I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature,
Of all forsaken and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,
Stretched at my length beneath some blasted oak;
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of a piece as I grew from it;
My uncombed locks, matted like mistletoe,
Hang o'er my hoary face; a murm'ring brook
Runs at my foot.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) Methinks I fancy
Myself there too.
ANTONY. The herd come jumping by me,
And, fearless, quench their thirst, while I look on,
And take me for their fellow-citizen.
More of this image, more; it lulls my thoughts. (*Soft music again*)
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) I must disturb him; I can hold no longer. (*Stands before him*)
ANTONY. (*Starting up*) Art thou Ventidius?
VENTIDIUS. Are you Antony?
I'm liker what I was, than you to him
I left you last.
ANTONY. I'm angry.
VENTIDIUS. So am I.
ANTONY. I would be private; leave me.
VENTIDIUS. Sir, I love you,
And therefore will not leave you.
ANTONY. Will not leave me!
Where have you learned that answer? Who am I?
VENTIDIUS. My emperor; the man I love next Heaven.
If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin;
Y'are all that's good and god-like.
ANTONY. All that's wretched.
You will not leave me then?
VENTIDIUS. 'Twas too presuming
To say I would not, but I dare not leave you;
And, 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence
So soon, when I so far have come to see you.
ANTONY. Now thou hast seen me, art thou satisfied?
For, if a friend, thou hast beheld enough;
And, if a foe, too much.
VENTIDIUS. (*Weeping*) Look, emperor, this is no common dew.
I have not wept this forty year; but now

My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.
ANTONY. By Heav'n, he weeps, poor good old man—he weeps!
The big round drops course one another down
The furrows of his cheeks!—Stop 'em, Ventidius,
Or I shall blush to death; they set my shame,
That caused 'em, full before me.
VENTIDIUS. I'll do my best.
ANTONY. Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends:
See, I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine.—Nay, father.
VENTIDIUS. Emperor.
ANTONY. Emperor! Why, that's the style of victory;
The conqu'ring soldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his general so: but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.
VENTIDIUS. I warrant you.
ANTONY. Actium, Actium! Oh—
VENTIDIUS. It sits too near you.
ANTONY. Here, here it lies, a lump of lead by day,
And, in my short, distracted nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams—
VENTIDIUS. Out with it; give it vent.
ANTONY. Urge not my shame.
I lost a battle.
VENTIDIUS. So has Julius done.
ANTONY. Thou favor'st me, and speak'st not half thou thinkst;
For Julius fought it out, and lost it fairly:
But Antony—
VENTIDIUS. Nay, stop not.
ANTONY. Antony
(Well, thou wilt have it), like a coward, fled,
Fled while his soldiers fought; fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave.
I know thou cam'st prepared to rail.
VENTIDIUS. I did.
ANTONY. I'll help thee.—I have been a man, Ventidius—
VENTIDIUS. Yes, and a brave one; but—
ANTONY. I know thy meaning.
But I have lost my reason; have disgraced
The name of soldier with inglorious ease.
In the full vintage of my flowing honors,
Sate still, and saw it pressed by other hands.
Fortune came smiling to my youth, and wooed it,
And purple greatness met my ripened years.
When first I came to empire, I was born
On tides of people, crowding to my triumphs,
The wish of nations; and the willing world
Received me as its pledge of future peace;
I was so great, so happy, so beloved,
Fate could not ruin me; till I took pains,
And worked against my fortune, chid her from me,
And turned her loose; yet still she came again.
My careless days, and my luxurious nights,
At length have wearied her, and now she's gone,—
Gone, gone, divorced forever. Help me, soldier,
To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
Who labored to be wretched; prithee, curse me.
VENTIDIUS. No.
ANTONY. Why?
VENTIDIUS. You are too sensible already
Of what y'have done, too conscious of your failings;
And, like a scorpion, whipped by others first
To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
I would bring balm and pour it in your wounds,
Cure your distempered mind, and heal your fortunes.
ANTONY. I know thou wouldst.
VENTIDIUS. I will.
ANTONY. Ha, ha, ha, ha!
VENTIDIUS. You laugh.
ANTONY. I do, to see officious love
Give cordials to the dead.
VENTIDIUS. You would be lost then?
ANTONY. I am.

VENTIDIUS. I say you are not. Try your fortune.
ANTONY. I have, to th'utmost. Dost thou think me desperate
Without just cause? No, when I found all lost
Beyond repair, I hid me from the world,
And learned to scorn it here; which now I do
So heartily, I think it is not worth
The cost of keeping.
VENTIDIUS. Cæsar thinks not so;
He'll thank you for the gift he could not take.
You would be killed like Tully, would you? Do,
Hold out your throat to Cæsar, and die tamely.
ANTONY No, I can kill myself; and so resolve.
VENTIDIUS. I can die with you too, when time shall serve;
But Fortune calls upon us now to live,
To fight, to conquer.
ANTONY. Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius.
VENTIDIUS. No, 'tis you dream. You sleep away your hours
In desperate sloth, miscalled philosophy.
Up, up, for honor's sake; twelve legions wait you,
And long to call you chief; by painful journeys
I led 'em, patient both of heat and hunger,
Down from the Parthian marches to the Nile.
'Twill do you good to see their sun-burnt faces,
Their scarred cheeks, and chopped hands; there's virtue in 'em.
They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates
Than yon trim bands can buy.
ANTONY. Where left you them?
VENTIDIUS. I said in Lower Syria.
ANTONY. Bring 'em hither;
There may be life in these.
VENTIDIUS. They will not come.
ANTONY. Why didst thou mock my hopes with promis'd aids,
To double my despair? They're mutinous?
VENTIDIUS. Most firm and loyal.
ANTONY. Yet they will not march
To succor me. O trifler!
VENTIDIUS. They petition
You would make haste to head 'em.
ANTONY. I'm besieged.
VENTIDIUS. There's but one way shut up; how came I hither?
ANTONY. I will not stir.
VENTIDIUS. They would perhaps desire
A better reason.
ANTONY. I have never used
My soldiers to demand a reason of
My actions. Why did they refuse to march?
VENTIDIUS. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
ANTONY. What was't they said?
VENTIDIUS. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Why should they fight, indeed, to make her conquer,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms
Which, for a kiss, at your next midnight feast
You'll sell to her? Then she new-names her jewels,
And calls this diamond such or such a tax;
Each pendant in her ear shall be a province.
ANTONY. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free license
On all my other faults, but, on your life,
No word of Cleopatra; she deserves
More worlds than I can lose.
VENTIDIUS. Behold, you Pow'rs,
To whom you have intrusted humankind;
See Europe, Africk, Asia, put in balance,
And all weighed down by one light, worthless woman!
I think the gods are Antony's, and give
Like prodigals this neather world away
To none but wasteful hands.
ANTONY. You grow presumptuous.
VENTIDIUS. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.
ANTONY. Plain love! plain arrogance, plain insolence!
Thy men are cowards; thou, an envious traitor,
Who, under seeming honesty, hast vented

The burden of thy rank, o'erflowing gall.
Oh, that thou wert my equal, great in arms
As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
Without a stain to honor!
VENTIDIUS. You may kill me;
You have done more already—called me traitor.
ANTONY. Art thou not one?
VENTIDIUS. For showing you yourself,
Which none else durst have done? But had I been
That name which I disdain to speak again,
I needed not have sought your abject fortunes,
Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
What hindrèd me t'have led my conqu'ring eagles
To fill Octavius's bands? I could have been
A traitor then, a glorious, happy traitor,
And not have been so called.
ANTONY. Forgive me, soldier;
I've been too passionate.
VENTIDIUS. You thought me false;
Thought my old age betrayed you. Kill me, sir;
Pray, kill me! Yet you need not; your unkindness
Has left your sword no work.
ANTONY. I did not think so.
I said it in my rage; prithee, forgive me.
Why didst thou tempt my anger, by discovery
Of what I would not hear?
VENTIDIUS. No prince but you
Could merit that sincerity I used,
Nor durst another man have ventured it;
But you, ere love misled your wand'ring eyes,
Were sure the chief and best of human race,
Framed in the very pride and boast of nature;
So perfect, that the gods who formed you, wondered
At their own skill, and cried, "A lucky hit
Has mended our design." Their envy hindrèd,
Else you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When Heav'n would work for ostentation sake,
To copy out again.
ANTONY. But Cleopatra—
Go on; for I can bear it now.
VENTIDIUS. No more.
ANTONY. Thou dar'st not trust my passion, but thou may'st:
Thou only lov'st; the rest have flatter'd me.
VENTIDIUS. Heav'n's blessing on your heart for that kind word!
May I believe you love me? Speak again.
ANTONY. Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and this. (*Hugging him*)
Thy praises were unjust; but I'll deserve 'em,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt.
Lead me to victory; thou know'st the way.
VENTIDIUS. And will you leave this—
ANTONY. Prithee, do not curse her,
And I will leave her—though, Heav'n knows, I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire, all but honor.
But I will leave her.
VENTIDIUS. That's my royal master;
And shall we fight?
ANTONY. I warrant thee, old soldier,
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron;
And at the head of our old troops, that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud, "Come, follow me!"
VENTIDIUS. Oh, now I hear my emperor! in that word
Octavius fell. Gods, let me see that day,
And, if I have ten years behind, take all;
I'll thank you for th'exchange.
ANTONY. Oh, Cleopatra!
VENTIDIUS. Again?
ANTONY. I've done; in that last sigh, she went.
Cæsar shall know what 'tis to force a lover
From all he holds most dear.
VENTIDIUS. Methinks you breath
Another soul; your looks are more divine;
You speak a hero, and you move a god.
ANTONY. Oh, thou hast fired me; my soul's up in arms,
And mans each part about me. Once again,
That noble eagerness of fight has seized me;
That eagerness with which I darted upward
To Cassius's camp; in vain the steepy hill

Opposed my way; in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head and planted all my shield.
I won the trenches while my foremost men
Lagged on the plain below.
VENTIDIUS. Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another hour!
ANTONY. Come on, my soldier!
Our hearts and arms are still the same. I long
Once more to meet our foes, that thou and I,
Like Time and Death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to 'em; mow 'em out a passage,
And, ent'ring where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field.

Exeunt

ACT II

[*Enter*] CLEOPATRA, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS

CLEOPATRA. What shall I do, or whither shall I turn?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.
ALEXAS. He goes to fight for you.
CLEOPATRA. Then he would see me, ere he went to fight.
Flatter me not; if once he goes, he's lost,
And all my hopes destroyed.
ALEXAS. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?
CLEOPATRA. I am no queen:
Is this to be a queen, to be besieged
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain? These ills are small:
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come, Octavius,
I have no more to lose; prepare thy bands.
I'm fit to be a captive. Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.
IRAS. Call reason to assist you.
CLEOPATRA. I have none.
And none would have; my love's a noble madness,
Which shows the cause deserved it. Moderate sorrow
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man;
But I have loved with such transcendent passion,
I soared, at first, quite out of Reason's view,
And now am lost above it. No, I'm proud
'Tis thus; would Antony could see me now!
Think you he would not sigh? Though he must leave me,
Sure he would sigh; for he is noble-natured,
And bears a tender heart: I know him well.
Ah, no, I know him not; I knew him once,
But now 'tis past.
IRAS. Let it be past with you:
Forget him, madam.
CLEOPATRA. Never, never, Iras.
He once was mine; and once, though now 'tis gone,
Leaves a faint image of possession still.
ALEXAS. Think him unconstant, cruel, and ungrateful.
CLEOPATRA. I cannot; if I could, those thoughts were vain.
Faithless, ungrateful, cruel though he be,
I still must love him.

Enter CHARMION

Now, what news, my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to live, or die?—nay, do I live?
Or am I dead? for when he gave his answer,
Fate took the word, and then I lived or died.
CHARMION. I found him, madam—
CLEOPATRA. A long speech preparing?
If thou bring'st comfort, haste, and give it me,
For never was more need.
IRAS. I know he loves you.
CLEOPATRA. Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so
Before her tongue could speak it; now she studies
To soften what he said. But give me death,
Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguised,
And in the words he spoke.
CHARMION. I found him, then,

Incompassed 'round, I think, with iron statues;
So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
While awfully he cast his eyes about,
And ev'ry leader's hopes or fears surveyed.
Methought he looked resolved, and yet not pleased.
When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
He blushed, and bade make way.

ALEXAS. There's comfort yet.

CHARMION. Ventidius fixed his eyes upon my passage
Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
And sullenly gave place; I told my message,
Just as you gave it, broken and disordered.
I numbrèd in it all your sighs and tears,
And while I moved your pitiful request,
That you but only begged a last farewell,
He fetched an inward groan, and ev'ry time
I named you, sighed, as if his heart were breaking,
But shunned my eyes, and guiltily looked down.
He seemed not now that awful Antony
Who shook an armed assembly with his nod;
But, making show as he would rub his eyes,
Disguised and blotted out a falling tear.

CLEOPATRA. Did he then weep? And was I worth a tear?
If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing,
Tell me no more, but let me die contented.

CHARMION. He bid me say, he knew himself so well,
He could deny you nothing, if he saw you;
And therefore—

CLEOPATRA. Thou wouldst say, he would not see me?

CHARMION. And therefore begged you not to use a power,
Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
Respect you as he ought.

CLEOPATRA. Is that a word
For Antony to use to Cleopatra?
Oh, that faint word, respect! how I disdain it!
Disdain myself, for loving after it!
He should have kept that word for cold Octavia;
Respect is for a wife. Am I that thing,
That dull, insipid lump, without desires,
And without pow'r to give 'em?

ALEXAS. You misjudge;
You see through love, and that deludes your sight,
As what is straight seems crooked through the water;
But I, who bear my reason undisturbed,
Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
And shuns his master's eyes; if you pursue him,
My life on't, he still drags a chain along,
That needs must clog his flight.

CLEOPATRA. Could I believe thee!—

ALEXAS. By ev'ry circumstance I know he loves.
True, he's hard pressed, by int'rest and by honor;
Yet he but doubts, and parleys, and casts out
Many a long look for succor.

CLEOPATRA. He sends word,
He fears to see my face.

ALEXAS. And would you more?
He shows his weakness who declines the combat,
And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
More plainly? To my ears, the message sounds—
"Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come;
Come, free me from Ventidius, from my tyrant;
See me, and give me a pretence to leave him!"—
I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.
Please you, retire a while; I'll work him first,
That he may bend more easy.

CLEOPATRA. You shall rule me;
But all, I fear, in vain.

Exit with CHARMION *and* IRAS

ALEXAS. I fear so too;
Though I concealed my thoughts, to make her bold;
But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it!

(*Withdraws*)

Enter Lictors *with fasces, one bearing the eagle. Then enter* ANTONY *with* VENTIDIUS, *followed by other* Commanders

ANTONY. Octavius is the minion of blind chance,
But holds from virtue nothing.
VENTIDIUS. Has he courage?
ANTONY. But just enough to season him from coward.
Oh, 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge,
The most deliberate fighter! if he ventures
(As in Illyria once they say he did
To storm a town), 'tis when he cannot choose,
When all the world have fixed their eyes upon him.
And then he lives on that for seven years after;
But at a close revenge he never fails.
VENTIDIUS. I heard you challenged him.
ANTONY. I did, Ventidius.
What think'st thou was his answer? 'Twas so tame!—
He said, he had more ways than one to die;
I had not.
VENTIDIUS. Poor!
ANTONY. He has more ways than one,
But he would choose 'em all before that one.
VENTIDIUS. He first would choose an ague or a fever.
ANTONY. No; it must be an ague, not a fever;
He has not warmth enough to die by that.
VENTIDIUS. Or old age and a bed.
ANTONY. Aye,[1] there's his choice.
He would live, like a lamp, to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
O Hercules! Why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of Heav'n? Why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men, of whom each one
Is braver than himself?
VENTIDIUS. You conquered for him.
Philippi knows it; there you shared with him
That empire which your sword made all your own.
ANTONY. Fool that I was, upon my eagle's wings
I bore this wren, till I was tired with soaring,
And now he mounts above me.
Good Heav'ns, is this,—is this the man who braves me?
Who bids my age make way, drives me before him
To the world's ridge, and sweeps me off like rubbish?
VENTIDIUS. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.
ANTONY. Then give the word to march;
I long to leave this prison of a town,
To join thy legions, and in open field
Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter ALEXAS

ALEXAS. Great emperor,
In mighty arms renowned above mankind,
But, in soft pity to th'oppressed, a god!
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.
VENTIDIUS. Smooth sycophant!
ALEXAS. A thousand wishes and ten thousand prayers,
Millions of blessings wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent
As many dear embraces to your arms,
As many parting kisses to your lips;
But those, she fears, have wearied you already.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) False crocodile!
ALEXAS. And yet she begs not now, you would not leave her;
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
Too presuming
For her low fortune, and your ebbing love;
That were a wish for her more prosp'rous days,
Her blooming beauty, and your growing kindness.
ANTONY. (*Aside*) Well, I must man it out.—What would the queen?

[1] Q1 *I*; often so.

ALEXAS. First, to these noble warriors who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame
(Too daring, and too dang'rous for her quiet),
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears—the care of you.
VENTIDIUS. Yes, witness Actium.
ANTONY. Let him speak, Ventidius.
ALEXAS. [*To the* Commanders] You, when his matchless valor bears him forward,
With ardor too heroic, on his foes,
Fall down, as she would do, before his feet;
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death.
Tell him, this god is not invulnerable;
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And, that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles, as a pawn,
Which, at your wished return, she will redeem
(*Gives jewels to the* Commanders)
With all the wealth of Egypt;
This to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.
VENTIDIUS. Tell her, I'll none on't;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty.
Not all the diamonds of the East can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see
These and the rest of all her sparkling store,
Where they shall more deservingly be placed.
ANTONY. And who must wear 'em then?
VENTIDIUS. The wronged Octavia.
ANTONY. You might have spared that word.
VENTIDIUS. And he that bribe.
ANTONY. But have I no remembrance?
ALEXAS. Yes, a dear one;
Your slave the queen—
ANTONY. My mistress.
ALEXAS. Then your mistress;
Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts
(The emblems of her own), may bind your arm. (*Presenting a bracelet*)
VENTIDIUS. Now, my best lord, in honor's name I ask you,
For manhood's sake and for your own dear safety,
Touch not these poisoned gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch 'em not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath 'em,
And more than aconite has dipped the silk.
ANTONY. Nay, now you grow too cynical, Ventidius.
A lady's favors may be worn with honor.
What, to refuse her bracelet! On my soul,
When I lie pensive in my tent alone,
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights,
To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,
To count for every one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time,
And now and then the fury of her love,
When—And what harm's in this?
ALEXAS. None, none, my lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past forever.
ANTONY. (*Going to tie it*) We soldiers are so awkward—help me tie it.
ALEXAS. In faith, my lord, we courtiers, too, are awkward
In these affairs; so are all men, indeed—
Ev'n I, who am not one. But shall I speak?
ANTONY. Yes, freely.
ALEXAS. Then, my lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she who sent it can.
VENTIDIUS. Hell, death! this eunuch pandar ruins you.
You will not see her?
ALEXAS *whispers an* Attendant, *who goes out*
ANTONY. But to take my leave.
VENTIDIUS. Then I have washed an Ethiope. Y'are undone;
Y'are in the toils; y'are taken, y'are destroyed.
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.
ANTONY. You fear too soon.
I'm constant to myself. I know my strength;
And yet she shall not think me barbarous neither,
Born in the depths of Africk. I'm a Roman,
Bred in the rules of soft humanity.

A guest, and kindly used, should bid farewell.
VENTIDIUS. You do not know
How weak you are to her, how much an infant.
You are not proof against a smile or glance;
A sigh will quite disarm you.
ANTONY. See, she comes!
Now you shall find your error. Gods, I thank you!
I formed the danger greater than it was,
And now 'tis near, 'tis lessened.
VENTIDIUS. Mark the end yet.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS

ANTONY. Well, madam, we are met.
CLEOPATRA. Is this a meeting?
Then we must part?
ANTONY. We must.
CLEOPATRA. Who says we must?
ANTONY. Our own hard fates.
CLEOPATRA. We make those fates ourselves.
ANTONY. Yes, we have made 'em; we have loved each other
Into our mutual ruin.
CLEOPATRA. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;
I have no friends in Heav'n, and all the world
(As 'twere the bus'ness of mankind to part us)
Is arm'd against my love. Ev'n you yourself
Join with the rest; you, you are armed against me.
ANTONY. I will be justified in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore hear me.
If I mix a lie
With any truth, reproach me freely with it;
Else favor me with silence.
CLEOPATRA. You command me,
And I am dumb.
VENTIDIUS. [*Aside*] I like this well; he shows authority.
ANTONY. That I derive my ruin
From you alone—
CLEOPATRA. Oh, heav'ns! I ruin you!
ANTONY. You promised me your silence, and you break it
Ere I have scarce begun.
CLEOPATRA. Well, I obey you.
ANTONY. When I beheld you first, it was in Egypt,
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes; you gave me love,
And were too young to know it. That I settled
Your father in his throne, was for your sake;
I left th'acknowledgment for time to ripen.
Cæsar stepped in, and, with a greedy hand,
Plucked the green fruit, ere the first blush of red,
Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was, beside, too great for me to rival;
But I deserved you first, though he enjoyed you.
When, after, I beheld you in Cilicia,
An enemy to Rome, I pardoned you.
CLEOPATRA. I cleared myself—
ANTONY. Again you break your promise.
I loved you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom stained by Cæsar,
And not half mine. I went to Egypt with you,
And hid me from the bus'ness of the world,
Shut out enquiring nations from my sight,
To give whole years to you.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) Yes, to your shame be't spoken.
ANTONY. How I loved,
Witness, ye days and nights, and all [ye] hours,
That danced away with down upon your feet,
As all your bus'ness were to count my passion!
One day passed by, and nothing saw but love;
Another came, and still 'twas only love;
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And I untired with loving.
I saw you ev'ry day, and all the day;
And ev'ry day was still but as the first,
So eager was I still to see you more.
VENTIDIUS. 'Tis all too true.
ANTONY. Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous,
As she indeed had reason; raised a war
In Italy, to call me back.
VENTIDIUS. But yet

You went not.
ANTONY. While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mould'ring from my hands each hour,
And left me scarce a grasp (I thank your love for't).
VENTIDIUS. [*Aside*] Well pushed: that last was home.
CLEOPATRA. Yet may I speak?
ANTONY. If I have urged a falsehood, yes; else not.
Your silence says I have not. Fulvia died (Pardon, you gods, with my unkindness died).
To set the world at peace, I took Octavia,
This Cæsar's sister; in her pride of youth
And flow'r of beauty did I wed that lady,
Whom blushing I must praise, because I left her.
You called; my love obeyed the fatal summons.
This raised the Roman arms; the cause was yours.
I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;
You hindrèd it; yet, when I fought at sea,
Forsook me fighting; and (oh, stain to honor!
Oh, lasting shame!) I knew not that I fled,
But fled to follow you.
VENTIDIUS. What haste she made to hoist her purple sails!
And, to appear magnificent in flight,
Drew half our strength away.
ANTONY. All this you caused.
And would you multiply more ruins on me?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gathered up the shipwrack of my fortunes;
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits.
And you have watched the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have aught to answer,
Now speak; you have free leave.
ALEXAS. (*Aside*) She stands confounded; Despair is in her eyes.
VENTIDIUS. Now lay a sigh i'th'way to stop his passage.
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions;
'Tis like they shall be sold.
CLEOPATRA. How shall I plead my cause, when you, my judge,
Already have condemned me? Shall I bring
The love you bore me for my advocate?
That now is turned against me, that destroys me;
For love, once past, is at the best, forgotten.
But oft'ner sours to hate. 'Twill please my lord
To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty.
But could I once have thought it would have pleased you,
That you would pry with narrow searching eyes
Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
And watching all advantages with care
That serve to make me wretched? Speak, my lord,
For I end here. Though I deserve this usage,
Was it like you to give it?
ANTONY. Oh, you wrong me,
To think I sought this parting, or desired
To accuse you more than what will clear myself,
And justify this breach.
CLEOPATRA. Thus low I thank you.
And, since my innocence will not offend,
I shall not blush to own it.
VENTIDIUS. [*Aside*] After this,
I think she'll blush at nothing.
CLEOPATRA. You seem grieved
(And therein you are kind) that Cæsar first
Enjoyed my love, though you deserved it better.
I grieve for that, my lord, much more than you;
For, had I first been yours, it would have saved
My second choice: I never had been his,
And ne'er had been but yours. But Cæsar first,
You say, possessed my love. Not so, my lord.
He first possessed my person; you, my love.
Cæsar loved me, but I loved Antony.
If I endured him after, 'twas because
I judged it due to the first name of men;

And, half constrained, I gave, as to a tyrant,
What he would take by force.
VENTIDIUS. O siren! siren!
Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
Has she not ruined you? I still urge that,
The fatal consequence.
CLEOPATRA. The consequence, indeed!
For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
To say it was designed. 'Tis true, I loved you,
And kept you far from an uneasy wife
(Such Fulvia was).
Yes, but he'll say, you left Octavia for me;—
And can you blame me to receive that love,
Which quitted such desert for worthless me?
How often have I wished some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love, to be refused for you!
VENTIDIUS. Words, words!—But Actium, sir; remember Actium.
CLEOPATRA. Ev'n there, I dare his malice.
True, I counselled
To fight at sea; but I betrayed you not.
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear;
Would I had been a man, not to have feared!
For none would then have envied me your friendship,
Who envy me your love.
ANTONY. We're both unhappy;
If nothing else, yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak; would you have me perish by my stay?
CLEOPATRA. If as a friend you ask my judgment, go;
If, as a lover, stay. If you must perish—
'Tis a hard word—but stay.
VENTIDIUS. See now th'effects of her so boasted love!
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her.
But could she 'scape without you, oh, how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind!
CLEOPATRA. Then judge my love by this.
(*Giving* ANTONY *a writing*)
Could I have born
A life or death, a happiness or woe,
From yours divided, this had giv'n me means.
ANTONY. By Hercules, the writing of Octavius!
I know it well; 'tis that proscribing hand,
Young as it was, that led the way to mine,
And left me but the second place in murder.
—See, see, Ventidius! here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it, as a present,
So, in requital, she forsake my fortunes
And join her arms with his!
CLEOPATRA. And yet you leave me!
You leave me, Antony; and yet I love you—
Indeed I do. I have refused a kingdom:
That's a trifle;
For I could part with life, with anything,
But only you. Oh, let me die but with you!
Is that a hard request?
ANTONY. Next living with you,
'Tis all that Heav'n can give.
ALEXAS. (*Aside*) He melts; we conquer.
CLEOPATRA. No, you shall go; your int'rest calls you hence.
Yes, your dear interest pulls too strong for these
Weak arms to hold you here.—
(*Takes his hand*)
Go! leave me, soldier
(For you're no more a lover); leave me dying;
Push me all pale and panting from your bosom,
And, when your march begins, let one run after,
Breathless almost for joy, and cry, "She's dead."
The soldiers shout; you then, perhaps, may sigh,
And muster all your Roman gravity.
Ventidius chides; and straight your brow clears up,
As I had never been. [*Embraces* ANTONY]
ANTONY. Gods, 'tis too much—too much for man to bear!
CLEOPATRA. What is't for me then,
A weak, forsaken woman, and a lover?—

Here let me breathe my last: envy me not
This minute in your arms: I'll die apace,
As fast as e'er I can, and end your trouble.
ANTONY. Die! Rather let me perish; loosen'd nature
Leap from its hinges! Sink the props of Heav'n,
And fall the skies to crush the neather world!
—My eyes, my soul, my all.
(*Embraces her*)
VENTIDIUS. And what's this toy,
In balance with your fortune, honor, fame?
ANTONY. What is't, Ventidius?—it outweighs 'em all;
Why, we have more than conquered Cæsar now:
My queen's not only innocent, but loves me.
This, this is she who drags me down to ruin!
"But, could she 'scape without me, with what haste
Would she let slip her hold and make to shore,
And never look behind!"
—Down on thy knees, blasphemer as thou art,
And ask forgiveness of wronged innocence.
VENTIDIUS. I'll rather die than take it. Will you go?
ANTONY. Go! whither? Go from all that's excellent?
Faith, honor, virtue, all good things forbid
That I should go from her who sets my love
Above the price of kingdoms! Give, you gods,
Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
This rattle of a globe to play withal,
This gu-gau world, and put him cheaply off:
I'll not be pleased with less than Cleopatra.
CLEOPATRA. She's wholly yours. My heart's so full of joy,
That I shall do some wild extravagance
Of love in public; and the foolish world,
Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.
VENTIDIUS. O women! women! women! all the gods
Have not such pow'r of doing good to man,
As you of doing harm! *Exit*

ANTONY. Our men are armed.
Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp.
I would revenge the treachery he meant me,
And long security makes conquest easy.
I'm eager to return before I go,
For all the pleasures I have known beat thick
On my remembrance; how I long for night!
That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
And once triumph o'er Cæsar [ere][1] we die. *Exeunt*

ACT III

At one door enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS, *a train of* Egyptians: *at the other,* ANTONY *and* Romans. *The entrance on both sides is prepared by music, the trumpets first sounding on* ANTONY'S *part, then answered by timbrels, &c., on* CLEOPATRA'S. CHARMION *and* IRAS *hold a laurel wreath betwixt them. A dance of* Egyptians. *After the ceremony,* CLEOPATRA *crowns* ANTONY

ANTONY. I thought how those white arms would fold me in,
And strain me close, and melt me into love;
So, pleased with that sweet image, I sprung forwards,
And added all my strength to every blow.
CLEOPATRA. Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms!
You've been too long away from my embraces;
But when I have you fast and all my own,
With broken murmurs, and with amorous sighs,
I'll say, you were unkind, and punish you,
And mark you red with many an eager kiss.
ANTONY. My brighter Venus!
CLEOPATRA. O my greater Mars!
ANTONY. Thou joinst us well, my love!
Suppose me come from the Phlegræan plains,
Where gasping giants lay, cleft by my sword,
And mountain tops pared off each other blow,

[1]Omitted in Q1.

To bury those I slew. Receive me, goddess!
Let Cæsar spread his subtle nets like Vulcan;
In thy embraces I would be beheld
By Heav'n and earth at once,
And make their envy what they meant their sport.
Let those who took us blush; I would love on
With awful state, regardless of their frowns,
As their superior god.
There's no satiety of love in thee:
Enjoy'd, thou still art new; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms. The ripened fruit but falls,
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place;
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *and stands apart*

ALEXAS. Oh, now the danger's past, your general comes!
He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs;
But with contracted brows looks frowning on,
As envying your success.
ANTONY. Now, on my soul, he loves me—truly loves me.
He never flattered me in any vice,
But awes me with his virtue: ev'n this minute,
Methinks, he has a right of chiding me.
—Lead to the temple. I'll avoid his presence;
It checks too strong upon me.
Exeunt the rest. As ANTONY *is going,* VENTIDIUS *pulls him by the robe*
VENTIDIUS. Emperor!
ANTONY. (*Looking back*) 'Tis the old argument; I prithee, spare me.
VENTIDIUS. But this one hearing, emperor.
ANTONY. Let go
My robe; or, by my father Hercules—
VENTIDIUS. By Hercules his father, that's yet greater,
I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.
ANTONY. Thou see'st we are observed; attend me here,
And I'll return. *Exit*
VENTIDIUS. I'm waning in his favor; yet I love him.
I love this man, who runs to meet his ruin;
And sure the gods, like me, are fond of him.
His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one
And not reward the other.

Enter ANTONY

ANTONY. We can conquer,
You see, without your aid.
We have dislodged their troops;
They look on us at distance, and, like curs
'Scaped from the lion's paws, they bay far off,
And lick their wounds and faintly threaten war.
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.
VENTIDIUS. 'Tis well; and he
Who lost 'em, could have spared ten thousand more.
Yet if by this advantage you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms—
ANTONY. Oh, think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin, he'll no peace;
His malice is considerate in advantage.
Oh, he's the coolest murderer! so stanch
He kills and keeps his temper.
VENTIDIUS. Have you no friend
In all his army, who has power to move him?
Mæcenas or Agrippa might do much.
ANTONY. They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests.
We'll work it out by dint of sword, or perish.
VENTIDIUS. Fain I would find some other.
ANTONY. Thank thy love.
Some four or five such victories as this
Will save thy farther pains.
VENTIDIUS. Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard.
I know, sir, you have conquered against odds.
But still you draw supplies from one poor town,
And of Egyptians; he has all the world,
And at his back nations come pouring in,

To fill the gaps you make. Pray, think again.
ANTONY. Why dost thou drive me from myself, to search
For foreign aids?—to hunt my memory,
And range all o'er a waste and barren place,
To find a friend? The wretched have no friends.
—Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,
Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women;
He could resolve his mind as fire does wax,
From that hard, rugged image melt him down,
And mould him in what softer form he pleased.
VENTIDIUS. Him would I see—that man of all the world;
Just such a one we want.
ANTONY. He loved me too.
I was his soul; he lived not but in me.
We were so closed within each other's breasts,
The rivets were not found that joined us first.
That does not reach us yet: we were so mixed,
As meeting streams, both to ourselves were lost;
We were one mass. We could not give or take
But from the same; for he was I, I he.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) He moves as I would wish him.
ANTONY. After this,
I need not tell his name—'twas Dollabella.
VENTIDIUS. He's now in Cæsar's camp.
ANTONY. No matter where,
Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly
That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight
Because I feared he loved her. He confessed
He had a warmth, which for my sake he stifled;
For 'twere impossible that two, so one,
Should not have loved the same. When he departed,
He took no leave; and that confirmed my thoughts.
VENTIDIUS. It argues that he loved you more than her,
Else he had stayed; but he perceived you jealous,
And would not grieve his friend. I know he loves you.
ANTONY. I should have seen him then ere now.
VENTIDIUS. Perhaps
He has thus long been lab'ring for your peace.
ANTONY. Would he were here!
VENTIDIUS. Would you believe he loved you?
I read your answer in your eyes—you would.
Not to conceal it longer, he has sent
A messenger from Cæsar's camp, with letters.
ANTONY. Let him appear.
VENTIDIUS. I'll bring him instantly.
Exit VENTIDIUS, [*and*] *re-enters immediately with* DOLLABELLA
ANTONY. 'Tis he himself! himself, by holy friendship! (*Runs to embrace him*)
Art thou returned at last, my better half?
Come, give me all myself! Let me not live
If the young bridegroom, longing for his night,
Was ever half so fond.
DOLLABELLA. I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a nobler work. She's new come home,
Like a long-absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.
ANTONY. Thou hast what's left of me;
For I am now so sunk from what I was,
Thou find'st me at my lowest water-mark.
The rivers that ran in and raised my fortunes
Are all dried up, or take another course.
What I have left is from my native spring;
I've still a heart that swells in scorn of fate,
And lifts me to my banks.
DOLLABELLA. Still you are lord of all the world to me.
ANTONY. Why, then I yet am so; for thou art all.
If I had any joy when thou wert absent,

I grudged it to myself; methought I robbed
Thee of thy part. But, oh, my Dollabella!
Thou hast beheld me other than I am.
Hast thou not seen my morning chambers filled
With sceptered slaves who waited to salute me?
—With eastern monarchs who forgot the sun,
To worship my uprising? Menial kings
Ran coursing up and down my palace-yard,
Stood silent in my presence, watched my eyes,
And at my least command all started out,
Like racers to the goal.

DOLLABELLA. Slaves to your fortune.

ANTONY. Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?

VENTIDIUS. What you have made yourself; I will not flatter.

ANTONY. Is this friendly done?

DOLLABELLA. Yes; when his end is so, I must join with him;
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide.
Why am I else your friend?

ANTONY. Take heed, young man,
How thou upbraid'st my love; the queen has eyes,
And thou, too, hast a soul. Canst thou remember,
When, swelled with hatred, thou beheld'st her first,
As accessary to thy brother's death?

DOLLABELLA. Spare my remembrance; 'twas a guilty day,
And still the blush hangs here.

ANTONY. To clear herself
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt.
Her galley down the silver Cydnos rowed;
The tackling silk, the streamers waved with gold;
The gentle winds were lodged in purple sails;
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were placed,
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.

DOLLABELLA. No more! I would not hear it.

ANTONY. Oh, you must!
She lay, and leaned her cheek upon her hand
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if, secure of all beholders' hearts,
Neglecting, she could take 'em. Boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning with their painted wings the winds
That played about her face; but if she smiled,
A darting glory seemed to blaze abroad,
That men's desiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object. To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time; and while they played,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight,
And both to thought. 'Twas Heaven, or somewhat more;
For she so charmed all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.
Then, Dollabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarmed with wonder?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes,
And whisper in my ear, "Oh, tell her not
That I accused her with my brother's death?"

DOLLABELLA. And should my weakness be a plea for yours?
Mine was an age when love might be excused,
When kindly warmth, and when my springing youth,
Made it a debt to nature. Yours—

VENTIDIUS. Speak boldly.
Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
When no more heat was left but what you forced;
When all the sap was needful for the trunk:
When it went down, then you constrained the course,
And robbed from nature, to supply desire.
In you (I would not use so harsh a word),
But 'tis plain dotage.

ANTONY. Ha!

DOLLABELLA. 'Twas urged too home.
But yet the loss was private that I made;

'Twas but myself I lost. I lost no legions;
I had no world to lose, no people's love.
ANTONY. This from a friend?
DOLLABELLA. Yes, Antony, a true one—
A friend so tender that each word I speak
Stabs my own heart before it reach your ear.
Oh, judge me not less kind, because I chide!
To Cæsar I excuse you.
ANTONY. O ye gods!
Have I then lived to be excused to Cæsar?
DOLLABELLA. As to your equal.
ANTONY. Well, he's but my equal:
While I wear this
[*Touching his sword*]
He never shall be more.
DOLLABELLA. I bring conditions from him.
ANTONY. Are they noble?
Methinks thou shouldst not bring 'em else; yet he
Is full of deep dissembling—knows no honor
Divided from his int'rest. Fate mistook him;
For Nature meant him for an usurer.
He's fit indeed to buy, not conquer kingdoms.
VENTIDIUS. Then, granting this,
What pow'r was theirs who wrought so hard a temper
To honorable terms?
ANTONY. It was my Dollabella, or some god.
DOLLABELLA. Nor I, nor yet Mæcenas, nor Agrippa.
They were your enemies, and I, a friend
Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman's deed.
ANTONY. 'Twas like a Roman done. Show me that man
Who has preserved my life, my love, my honor;
Let me but see his face.
VENTIDIUS. That task is mine,
And, Heav'n, thou know'st how pleasing.
Exit VENTIDIUS
DOLLABELLA. You'll remember
To whom you stand obliged?
ANTONY. When I forget it,
Be thou unkind; and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him too.
DOLLABELLA. I fear she will not.
ANTONY. But she shall do't! The queen, my Dollabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?
DOLLABELLA. I would not see her lost.
ANTONY. When I forsake her,
Leave me, my better stars! for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her,
At no less price than kingdoms, to betray me;
But she resisted all; and yet thou chid'st me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?
DOLLABELLA. Yes; there's my reason.
[*Pointing to those approaching*]

Re-enter VENTIDIUS, *with* OCTAVIA, *leading* ANTONY'S *two little daughters*

ANTONY. Where?—Octavia there!
(*Starting back*)
VENTIDIUS. What, is she poison to you?—a disease?
Look on her, view her well, and those she brings.
Are they all strangers to your eyes? Has nature
No secret call, no whisper they are yours?
DOLLABELLA. For shame, my lord, if not for love, receive 'em
With kinder eyes! If you confess[1] a man,
Meet 'em, embrace 'em, bid 'em welcome to you.
Your arms should open, ev'n without your knowledge,
To clasp 'em in; your feet should turn to wings,
To bear you to 'em; and your eyes dart out
And aim a kiss, ere you could reach the lips.
ANTONY. I stood amazed, to think how they came hither.
VENTIDIUS. I sent for 'em; I brought 'em in, unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.
DOLLABELLA. Yet are you cold?
OCTAVIA. Thus long I have attended for my welcome,
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?

[1] admit yourself.

ANTONY. Cæsar's sister.
OCTAVIA. That's unkind.
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know, I had still remained in Cæsar's camp.
But your Octavia, your much injured wife,
Tho' banished from your bed, driven from your house,
In spite of Cæsar's sister, still is yours.
'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should offer,
But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride.
I come to claim you as my own; to show
My duty first; to ask, nay beg, your kindness.
Your hand, my lord; 'tis mine, and I will have it. (*Taking his hand*)
VENTIDIUS. Do, take it; thou deserv'st it.
DOLLABELLA. On my soul,
And so she does! She's neither too submissive,
Nor yet too haughty; but so just a mean
Shows, as it ought, a wife and Roman too.
ANTONY. I fear, Octavia, you have begged my life.
OCTAVIA. Begged it, my lord?
ANTONY. Yes, begged it, my ambassadress—
Poorly and basely begged it of your brother.
OCTAVIA. Poorly and basely I could never beg,
Nor could my brother grant.
ANTONY. Shall I, who to my kneeling slave could say,
"Rise up, and be a king"—shall I fall down
And cry, "Forgive me, Cæsar"? Shall I set
A man, my equal, in the place of Jove,
As he could give me being? No; that word,
"Forgive," would choke me up,
And die upon my tongue.
DOLLABELLA. You shall not need it.
ANTONY. I will not need it. Come, you've all betrayed me,—
My friend too!—to receive some vile conditions.
My wife has bought me with her prayers and tears,
And now I must become her branded slave.
In every peevish mood she will upbraid
The life she gave; if I but look awry,
She cries, "I'll tell my brother."
OCTAVIA. My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes;
But the conditions I have brought are such
You need not blush to take. I love your honor
Because 'tis mine; it never shall be said,
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
Sir, you are free—free, ev'n from her you loathe;
For, tho' my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like yours; I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the East. I may be dropped at Athens—
No matter where. I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.
VENTIDIUS. Was ever such a strife of sullen honor!
Both scorn to be obliged.
DOLLABELLA. Oh, she has touched him in the tender'st part;
See how he reddens with despite and shame,
To be outdone in generosity!
VENTIDIUS. See how he winks! how he dries up a tear,
That fain would fall!
ANTONY. Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
The greatness of your soul;
But cannot yield to what you have proposed.
For I can ne'er be conquered but by love,
And you do all for duty. You would free me,
And would be dropped at Athens; was't not so?
OCTAVIA. It was, my lord.
ANTONY. Then I must be obliged
To one who loves me not—who to herself
May call me thankless and ungrateful man.
—I'll not endure it; no.

VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) I am glad it pinches there.
OCTAVIA. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue?
That pride was all I had to bear me up,
That you might think you owed me for your life,
And owed it to my duty, not my love.
I have been injured, and my haughty soul
Could brook but ill the man who slights my bed.
ANTONY. Therefore you love me not?
OCTAVIA. Therefore, my lord, I should not love you.
ANTONY. Therefore you would leave me?
OCTAVIA. And therefore I should leave you—if I could.
DOLLABELLA. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
To say she loves; and yet she lets you see it.
Her modesty and silence plead her cause.
ANTONY. O Dollabella, which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? Pity pleads for Octavia,
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra?
VENTIDIUS. Justice and pity both plead for Octavia;
For Cleopatra, neither.
One would be ruined with you, but she first
Had ruined you; the other, you have ruined,
And yet she would preserve you.
In every thing their merits are unequal.
ANTONY. O my distracted soul!
OCTAVIA. Sweet Heav'n compose it!—
Come, come, my lord; if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not yours? Or stand they thus neglected
As they are mine? Go to him, children, go;
Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him—
For you may speak, and he may own you too,
Without a blush; and so he cannot all
His children. Go, I say, and pull him to me,
And pull him to yourselves, from that bad woman.
You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms;
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist.
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it, children;
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.
(*Here the* Children *go to him, &c.*)
VENTIDIUS. Was ever sight so moving?—Emperor!
DOLLABELLA. Friend!
OCTAVIA. Husband!
BOTH CHILDREN. Father!
ANTONY. I am vanquished; take me, Octavia. Take me, children; share me all.
(*Embracing them*)
I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much, in riot, from your stock;
But all shall be amended.
OCTAVIA. Oh, blest hour!
DOLLABELLA. Oh, happy change!
VENTIDIUS. My joy stops at my tongue;
But it has found two channels here for one,
And bubbles out above.
ANTONY. (*To* OCTAVIA) This is thy triumph; lead me where thou wilt,
Ev'n to thy brother's camp.
OCTAVIA. All there are yours.

Enter ALEXAS *hastily*

ALEXAS. The queen, my mistress, sir, and yours—
ANTONY. 'Tis past.—
Octavia, you shall stay this night; tomorrow,
Cæsar and we are one.
Exit leading OCTAVIA; DOLLABELLA *and the* Children *follow*
VENTIDIUS. There's news for you; run, my officious eunuch!
Be sure to be the first; haste forward!
Haste, my dear eunuch, haste! *Exit*
ALEXAS. This downright fighting fool, this thick-skulled hero,
This blunt, unthinking instrument of death,
With plain dull virtue has out-gone my wit.

Pleasure forsook my earliest infancy;
The luxury of others robbed my cradle,
And ravished thence the promise of a man.
Cast out from nature, disinherited
Of what her meanest children claim by kind,
Yet greatness kept me from contempt; that's gone.
Had Cleopatra followed my advice,
Then he had been betrayed who now forsakes.
She dies for love, but she has known its joys.
Gods, is this just, that I, who know no joys,
Must die because she loves?

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, [*and*] *train*

O madam, I have seen what blasts my eyes!
Octavia's here!
CLEOPATRA. Peace with that raven's note!
I know it too; and now am in
The pangs of death.
ALEXAS. You are no more a queen;
Egypt is lost.
CLEOPATRA. What tell'st thou me of Egypt?
My life, my soul is lost! Octavia has him!
Oh, fatal name to Cleopatra's love!
My kisses, my embraces, now are hers;
While I—But thou hast seen my rival; speak,
Does she deserve this blessing? Is she fair?
Bright as a goddess? And is all perfection
Confined to her?—It is. Poor I was made
Of that coarse matter which, when she was finished,
The gods threw by, for rubbish.
ALEXAS. She's indeed a very miracle.
CLEOPATRA. Death to my hopes—a miracle!
ALEXAS. (*Bowing*) A miracle,
I mean, of goodness; for in beauty, madam,
You make all wonders cease.
CLEOPATRA. I was too rash:
Take this in part of recompense. But, oh!
(*Giving a ring*)
I fear thou flatter'st me.
CHARMION. She comes! she's here!
IRAS. Fly, madam; Cæsar's sister!
CLEOPATRA. Were she the sister of the thund'rer Jove,
And bore her brother's lightning in her eyes,
Thus would I face my rival.
(*Meets* OCTAVIA *with* VENTIDIUS. OCTAVIA *bears up to her. Their trains come up on either side*)
OCTAVIA. I need not ask if you are Cleopatra;
Your haughty carriage—
CLEOPATRA. Shows I am a queen;
Nor need I ask you who you are.
OCTAVIA. A Roman;
A name that makes and can unmake a queen.
CLEOPATRA. Your lord, the man who serves me, is a Roman.
OCTAVIA. He was a Roman till he lost that name
To be a slave in Egypt; but I come
To free him thence.
CLEOPATRA. Peace, peace, my lover's Juno.
When he grew weary of that household-clog,
He chose my easier bonds.
OCTAVIA. I wonder not
Your bonds are easy; you have long been practised
In that lascivious art. He's not the first
For whom you spread your snares: let Cæsar witness.
CLEOPATRA. I loved not Cæsar; 'twas but gratitude
I paid his love. The worst your malice can,
Is but to say the greatest of mankind
Has been my slave. The next, but far above him
In my esteem, is he whom law calls yours,
But whom his love made mine.
OCTAVIA. (*Coming up close to her*) I would view nearer
That face which has so long usurped my right,
To find th'inevitable charms that catch
Mankind so sure, that ruined my dear lord.
CLEOPATRA. Oh, you do well to search; for had you known
But half these charms, you had not lost his heart.

OCTAVIA. Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,
Far from a modest wife! Shame of our sex,
Dost thou not blush to own those black endearments
That make sin pleasing?
CLEOPATRA. You may blush, who want 'em.
If bounteous nature, if indulgent Heav'n
Have giv'n me charms to please the bravest man,
Should I not thank 'em? Should I be ashamed,
And not be proud? I am, that he has loved me;
And, when I love not him, Heav'n change this face
For one like that.
OCTAVIA. Thou lov'st him not so well.
CLEOPATRA. I love him better, and deserve him more.
OCTAVIA. You do not—cannot; you have been his ruin.
Who made him cheap at Rome, but Cleopatra?
Who made him scorned abroad, but Cleopatra?
At Actium, who betrayed him? Cleopatra.
Who made his children orphans, and poor me
A wretched widow? Only Cleopatra.
CLEOPATRA. Yet she who loves him best is Cleopatra.
If you have suffered, I have suffered more.
You bear the specious title of a wife,
To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world
To favor it; the world contemns poor me.
For I have lost my honor, lost my fame,
And stained the glory of my royal house,
And all to bear the branded name of mistress.
There wants but life, and that too I would lose
For him I love.
OCTAVIA. Be't so, then; take thy wish.
Exit cum suis
CLEOPATRA. And 'tis my wish,
Now he is lost for whom alone I lived.
My sight grows dim, and every object dances
And swims before me in the maze of death.
My spirits, while they were opposed, kept up;
They could not sink beneath a rival's scorn.
But now she's gone, they faint.
ALEXAS. Mine have had leisure
To recollect their strength, and furnish counsel
To ruin her who else must ruin you.
CLEOPATRA. Vain promiser!
Lead me, my Charmion; nay, your hand too, Iras.
My grief has weight enough to sink you both.
Conduct me to some solitary chamber,
And draw the curtains round;
Then leave me to myself, to take alone
My fill of grief.
There I till death will his unkindness weep;
As harmless infants moan themselves asleep. *Exeunt*

ACT IV

[*Enter*] ANTONY [*and*] DOLLABELLA

DOLLABELLA. Why would you shift it from yourself on me?
Can you not tell her you must part?
ANTONY. I cannot.
I could pull out an eye and bid it go,
And t'other should not weep. O Dollabella,
How many deaths are in this word "depart"!
I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so;
One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
And I should melt till I were lost again.
DOLLABELLA. Then let Ventidius;
He's rough by nature.
ANTONY. Oh, he'll speak too harshly;
He'll kill her with the news.—Thou, only thou.
DOLLABELLA. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
That but to hear a story feigned for pleasure
Of some sad lover's death, moistens my eyes
And robs me of my manhood. I should speak
So faintly, with such fear to grieve her heart,
She'd not believe it earnest.

ANTONY. Therefore,—therefore
Thou, only thou art fit. Think thyself me;
And when thou speak'st (but let it first be long),
Take off the edge from every sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made
As other loves begin. Wilt thou do this?
DOLLABELLA. What you have said so sinks into my soul,
That, if I must speak, I shall speak just so.
ANTONY. I leave you then to your sad task. Farewell!
I sent her word to meet you.
(*Goes to the door and comes back*)
I forgot;
Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine.
Her crown and dignity shall be preserved,
If I have pow'r with Cæsar.—Oh, be sure
To think on that.
DOLLABELLA. Fear not, I will remember.
(ANTONY *goes again to the door and comes back*)
ANTONY. And tell her, too, how much I was constrained;
I did not this but with extremest force.
Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish hers. Insist on that.
DOLLABELLA. Trust me, I'll not forget it.
ANTONY. Then that's all.
(*Goes out and returns again*)
Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, tho' we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love,
The news would break my heart.—Now I must go;
For every time I have returned, I feel
My soul more tender; and my next command
Would be to bid her stay, and ruin both.
Exit
DOLLABELLA. Men are but children of a larger growth;
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain.
And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing;
But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view. Thus I discovered,
And blamed the love of ruined Antony;
Yet wish that I were he, to be so ruined.

Enter VENTIDIUS *above*

VENTIDIUS. Alone? and talking to himself? concerned too?
Perhaps my guess is right; he loved her once,
And may pursue it still.
DOLLABELLA. Oh, friendship! friendship!
Ill canst thou answer this; and reason, worse.
Unfaithful in th'attempt; hopeless to win;
And if I win, undone—mere madness all.
And yet th'occasion's fair. What injury
To him, to wear the robe which he throws by?
VENTIDIUS. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
To ruin her yet more with Antony.

Enter CLEOPATRA, *talking with* ALEXAS; CHARMION [*and*] IRAS *on the other side*

DOLLABELLA. She comes! What charms have sorrow on that face!
Sorrow seems pleased to dwell with so much sweetness;
Yet now and then a melancholy smile
Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,
And shows a moment's day.
VENTIDIUS. If she should love him too—
Her eunuch there!
That porcpisce[1] bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer,
Sweet devil, that I may hear.
ALEXAS. Believe me; try
(DOLLABELLA *goes over to* CHARMION *and* IRAS; *seems to talk with them*)
To make him jealous. Jealousy is like
A polished glass held to the lips when life's in doubt;
If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp, and show it.
CLEOPATRA. I grant you, jealousy's a proof of love,

[1] porpoise.

But 'tis a weak and unavailing med'cine;
It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
But has no pow'r to cure.
ALEXAS. 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too.
And then this Dollabella—who so fit
To practise on? He's handsome, valiant, young,
And looks as he were laid for nature's bait
To catch weak women's eyes.
He stands already more than half suspected
Of loving you; the least kind word or glance
You give this youth will kindle him with love.
Then, like a burning vessel set adrift,
You'll send him down amain before the wind,
To fire the heart of jealous Antony.
CLEOPATRA. Can I do this? Ah, no; my love's so true
That I can neither hide it where it is,
Nor show it where it is not. Nature meant me
A wife—a silly, harmless, household dove,
Fond without art and kind without deceit;
But Fortune, that has made a mistress of me,
Has[1] thrust me out to the wide world, unfurnished
Of falsehood to be happy.
ALEXAS. Force yourself.
Th'event will be, your lover will return
Doubly desirous to possess the good
Which once he feared to lose.
CLEOPATRA. I must attempt it;
But oh, with what regret!

Exit ALEXAS

(*She comes up to* DOLLABELLA)

VENTIDIUS. So, now the scene draws near; they're in my reach.
CLEOPATRA. (*To* DOLLABELLA) Discoursing with my women! Might not I
Share in your entertainment?
CHARMION. You have been
The subject of it, madam.
CLEOPATRA. How, and how?
IRAS. Such praises of your beauty!
CLEOPATRA. Mere poetry.
Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibullus,
Have taught you this from Citheris and Delia.
DOLLABELLA. Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt;
Citheris and Delia else had been unsung.
I, who have seen—had I been born a poet,
Should choose a nobler name.
CLEOPATRA. You flatter me.
But 'tis your nation's vice; all of your country
Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's like you.
I'm sure he sent you not to speak these words.
DOLLABELLA. No, madam; yet he sent me—
CLEOPATRA. Well, he sent you—
DOLLABELLA. Of a less pleasing errand.
CLEOPATRA. How less pleasing?
Less to yourself, or me?
DOLLABELLA. Madam, to both;
For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.
CLEOPATRA. You, Charmion, and your fellow, stand at distance.—

(*Aside*)

Hold up, my spirits.—Well, now your mournful matter;
For I'm prepared, perhaps can guess it too.
DOLLABELLA. I wish you would; for 'tis a thankless office,
To tell ill news; and I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.
CLEOPATRA. Of all your sex,
I soonest could forgive you, if you should.
VENTIDIUS. [*Aside*] Most delicate advances! Woman! woman!
Dear, damned, inconstant sex!
CLEOPATRA. In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?
DOLLABELLA. I wish I could not answer to that question.
CLEOPATRA. Then pass it o'er, because it troubles you:
I should have been more grieved another time.
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom.—Farewell, Egypt!
Yet is there any more?

[1] Q1 *hast.*

DOLLABELLA. Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief has turned your reason.
CLEOPATRA. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune,
And love may be expelled by other love,
As poisons are by poisons.
DOLLABELLA. You o'erjoy me, madam,
To find your griefs so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst; all are not false like him.
CLEOPATRA. No; Heav'n forbid they should.
DOLLABELLA. Some men are constant.
CLEOPATRA. And constancy deserves reward, that's certain.
DOLLABELLA. Deserves it not; but give it leave to hope.
VENTIDIUS. [*Aside*] I'll swear thou hast my leave. I have enough.
But how to manage this! Well, I'll consider.
Exit
DOLLABELLA. I came prepared
To tell you heavy news—news which I thought
Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear.
But you have met it with a cheerfulness
That makes my talk more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employed,
Would gladly speak its own.
CLEOPATRA. Hold, Dollabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my lord,
Or sought you this employment?
DOLLABELLA. He picked me out; and, as his bosom-friend,
He charged me with his words.
CLEOPATRA. The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word "depart."
DOLLABELLA. Oh, you mistake. He chose the harshest words;
With fiery eyes, and with contracted brows,
He coined his face in the severest stamp;
And fury shook his fabric, like an earthquake.
He heaved for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
In sounds scarce human—"Hence, away forever!
Let her begone, the blot of my renown,
And bane of all my hopes!
(*All the time of this speech*, CLEOPATRA *seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down*)
Let her be driv'n as far as men can think
From man's commérce! She'll poison to the center."
CLEOPATRA. Oh, I can bear no more!
DOLLABELLA. Help, help!—O wretch! O cursèd, cursèd wretch!
What have I done!
CHARMION. Help, chafe her temples, Iras.
IRAS. Bend, bend her forward quickly.
CHARMION. Heav'n be praised,
She comes again!
CLEOPATRA. Oh, let him not approach me.
Why have you brought me back to this loathed being,
Th'abode of falsehood, violated vows,
And injured love? For pity, let me go;
For if there be a place of long repose,
I'm sure I want it. My disdainful lord
Can never break that quiet, nor awake
The sleeping soul with hollowing in my tomb
Such words as fright her hence.—Unkind, unkind!
DOLLABELLA. (*Kneeling*) Believe me, 'tis against myself I speak;
That sure desires belief. I injured him;
My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh, had you seen
How often he came back, and every time
With something more obliging and more kind,
To add to what he said. What dear farewells!
How almost vanquished by his love he parted,
And leaned to what unwillingly he left!
I, traitor as I was, for love of you
(But what can you not do, who made me false!)
I forged that lie; for whose forgiveness kneels
This self-accused, self-punished criminal.

CLEOPATRA. With how much ease believe we what we wish!
Rise, Dollabella. If you have been guilty,
I have contributed, and too much love
Has made me guilty too.
Th'advance of kindness which I made, was feigned,
To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
But 'twould not last. Oh, rather let me lose,
Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.
DOLLABELLA. I find your breast fenced round from human reach,
Transparent as a rock of solid crystal—
Seen through, but never pierced. My friend, my friend!
What endless treasure hast thou thrown away,
And scattered, like an infant, in the ocean—
Vain sums of wealth, which none can gather thence!
CLEOPATRA. Could you not beg
An hour's admittance to his private ear?
Like one who wanders through long barren wilds
And yet foreknows no hospitable inn
Is near to succour hunger, eats his fill
Before his painful march;
So would I feed a while my famished eyes
Before we part; for I have far to go,
If death be far, and never must return.
(VENTIDIUS *with* OCTAVIA, *behind*)
VENTIDIUS. From hence you may discover.—Oh, sweet, sweet!
Would you indeed? the pretty hand in earnest?
DOLLABELLA. I will, for this reward.—
(*Takes her hand*)
Draw it not back;
'Tis all I e'er will beg.
VENTIDIUS. They turn upon us.
OCTAVIA. What quick eyes has guilt!
VENTIDIUS. Seem not to have observed 'em, and go on.

They enter

DOLLABELLA. Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?
VENTIDIUS. No.
I sought him, but I heard that he was private—
None with him but Hipparchus, his freedman.
DOLLABELLA. Know you his bus'ness?
VENTIDIUS. Giving him instructions,
And letters to his brother Cæsar.
DOLLABELLA. Well,
He must be found.
Exeunt DOLLABELLA *and* CLEOPATRA
OCTAVIA. Most glorious impudence!
VENTIDIUS. She looked, methought,
As she would say, "Take your old man, Octavia;
Thank you, I'm better here." Well, but what use
Make we of this discovery?
OCTAVIA. Let it die.
VENTIDIUS. I pity Dollabella; but she's dangerous.
Her eyes have pow'r beyond Thessalian charms,
To draw the moon from Heav'n; for eloquence,
The sea-green sirens taught her voice their flatt'ry;
And while she speaks, night steals upon the day,
Unmarked of those that hear. Then she's so charming,
Age buds at sight of her, and swells to youth.
The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles;
And with heaved hands, forgetting gravity,
They bless her wanton eyes. Even I, who hate her,
With a malignant joy behold such beauty;
And, while I curse, desire it. Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse
If now not fully cured. I know, this minute,
With Cæsar he's endeavoring her peace.
OCTAVIA. You have prevailed; but for a further purpose (*Walks off*)
I'll prove how he will relish this discovery.
What, make a strumpet's peace! it swells my heart:
It must not, sha'n't not be.
VENTIDIUS. His guards appear.
Let me begin, and you shall second me.

Enter ANTONY

ANTONY. Octavia, I was looking you, my love;
What, are your letters ready? I have giv'n
My last instructions.
OCTAVIA. Mine, my lord, are written.
ANTONY. Ventidius.
(*Drawing him aside*)
VENTIDIUS. My lord?
ANTONY. A word in private.
When saw you Dollabella?
VENTIDIUS. Now, my lord;
He parted hence, and Cleopatra with him.
ANTONY. Speak softly.—'Twas by my command he went,
To bear my last farewell.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aloud*) It looked indeed
Like your farewell.
ANTONY. More softly.—My farewell?
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of "My farewell"? He did it by my order.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aloud*) Then he obeyed your order. I suppose
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all—love.
ANTONY. How she mourned,
The poor forsaken creature!
VENTIDIUS. She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.
ANTONY. (*Aloud*) Thou dost belie her—
Most basely and maliciously belie her.
VENTIDIUS. I thought not to displease you; I have done.
OCTAVIA. (*Coming up*) You seem disturbed, my lord.
ANTONY. A very trifle.
Retire, my love.
VENTIDIUS. It was indeed a trifle.
He sent—
ANTONY. (*Angrily*) No more. Look how thou disobey'st me;
Thy life shall answer it.
OCTAVIA. Then 'tis no trifle.
VENTIDIUS. (*To Octavia*) 'Tis less—a very nothing; you too saw it,
As well as I, and therefore 'tis no secret.
ANTONY. She saw it!
VENTIDIUS. Yes; she saw young Dollabella—
ANTONY. Young Dollabella!
VENTIDIUS. Young—I think him young,
And handsome too; and so do others think him.
But what of that? He went by your command—
Indeed, 'tis probable, with some kind message;
For she received it graciously; she smiled.
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses;
She blushed, and sighed, and smiled, and blushed again;
At last she took occasion to talk softly,
And brought her cheek up close, and leaned on his;
At which he whispered kisses back on hers;
And then she cried aloud that constancy
Should be rewarded.
OCTAVIA. This I saw and heard.
ANTONY. What woman was it whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend?
Not Cleopatra!
VENTIDIUS. Even she, my lord.
ANTONY. My Cleopatra?
VENTIDIUS. Your Cleopatra—
Dollabella's Cleopatra—every man's Cleopatra.
ANTONY. Thou li'st!
VENTIDIUS. I do not lie, my lord.
Is this so strange? Should mistresses be left,
And not provide against a time of change?
You know she's not much used to lonely nights.
ANTONY. I'll think no more on't.
I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.
You needed not have gone this way, Octavia.
What harms it you that Cleopatra's just?
She's mine no more. I see, and I forgive:
Urge it no farther, love.
OCTAVIA. Are you concerned
That she's found false?

ANTONY. I should be, were it so;
For, tho' 'tis past, I would not that the world
Should tax my former choice, that I loved one
Of so light note; but I forgive you both.
VENTIDIUS. What has my age deserved that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?
If Heav'n be true, she's false.
ANTONY. Though Heav'n and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.
VENTIDIUS. I'll bring you, then, a witness
From hell, to prove her so.
(*Seeing* ALEXAS *just ent'ring, and starting back*)
—Nay, go not back,
For stay you must and shall.
ALEXAS. What means my lord?
VENTIDIUS. To make you do what most you hate,—speak truth.
You are of Cleopatra's private counsel,
Of her bed-counsel, her lascivious hours;
Are conscious of each nightly change she makes,
And watch her, as Chaldeans do the moon;
Can tell what signs she passes through, what day.
ALEXAS. My noble lord!
VENTIDIUS. My most illustrious pandar,
No fine set speech, no cadence, no turned periods,
But a plain home-spun truth, is what I ask.
I did, myself, o'erhear your queen make love
To Dollabella. Speak! for I will know
By your confession what more passed betwixt 'em;
How near the bus'ness draws to your employment;
And when the happy hour.
ANTONY. Speak truth, Alexas; whether it offend
Or please Ventidius, care not. Justify
Thy injured queen from malice. Dare his worst.
OCTAVIA. (*Aside*) See how he gives him courage! how he fears
To find her false! and shuts his eyes to truth,
Willing to be misled!
ALEXAS. As far as love may plead for woman's frailty,
Urged by desert and greatness of the lover,
So far, divine Octavia, may my queen
Stand even excused to you for loving him
Who is your lord; so far, from brave Ventidius,
May her past actions hope a fair report.
ANTONY. 'Tis well, and truly spoken. Mark, Ventidius.
ALEXAS. To you, most noble emperor, her strong passion
Stands not excused, but wholly justified.
Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
From Ind and Meroe drew the distant vows
Of sighing kings; and at her feet were laid
The scepters of the earth, exposed on heaps,
To choose where she would reign.
She thought a Roman only could deserve her,
And of all Romans only Antony;
And to be less than wife to you, disdained
Their lawful passion.
ANTONY. 'Tis but truth.
ALEXAS. And yet, tho' love, and your unmatch'd desert,
Have drawn her from the due regard of honor,
At last Heav'n opened her unwilling eyes
To see the wrongs she offered fair Octavia,
Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurped;
The sad effects of this improsperous war
Confirm'd those pious thoughts.
VENTIDIUS. (*Aside*) Oh, wheel you there?
Observe him now; the man begins to mend,
And talk substantial reason.—Fear not, eunuch;
The emperor has giv'n thee leave to speak.
ALEXAS. Else had I never dar'd t'offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urg'd
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not
Presume to say, her heart is wholly alter'd.
ANTONY. No, dare not for thy life; I charge thee dare not
Pronounce that fatal word!
OCTAVIA. (*Aside*) Must I bear this? Good Heav'n, afford me patience.

VENTIDIUS. On, sweet eunuch; my dear half man, proceed.
ALEXAS. Yet Dollabella
Has loved her long; he, next my god-like lord,
Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected, as she is, by him she lov'd—
ANTONY. Hence from my sight! for I can bear no more.
Let furies drag thee quick to hell; let all
The longer damned have rest; each torturing hand
Do thou employ, till Cleopatra comes;
Then join thou too, and help to torture her!
Exit ALEXAS, *thrust out by* ANTONY
OCTAVIA. 'Tis not well,
Indeed, my lord; 'tis much unkind to me,
To show this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandoned, faithless prostitute.
ANTONY. Octavia, leave me; I am much disordered.
—Leave me, I say.
OCTAVIA. My lord!
ANTONY. I bid you leave me.
VENTIDIUS. Obey him, madam; best withdraw a while,
And see how this will work.
OCTAVIA. Wherein have I offended you, my lord,
That I am bid to leave you? Am I false,
Or infamous? Am I a Cleopatra?
Were I she,
Base as she is, you would not bid me leave you;
But hang upon my neck, take slight excuses,
And fawn upon my falsehood.
ANTONY. 'Tis too much,
Too much, Octavia; I am pressed with sorrows
Too heavy to be borne, and you add more,
I would retire, and recollect what's left
Of man within, to aid me.
OCTAVIA. You would mourn
In private, for your love, who has betrayed you.
You did but half return to me; your kindness
Lingered behind with her. I hear, my lord,
You make conditions for her,
And would include her treaty. Wondrous proofs
Of love to me!
ANTONY. Are you my friend, Ventidius?
Or are you turned a Dollabella too,
And let this Fury loose?
VENTIDIUS. Oh, be advised,
Sweet madam, and retire.
OCTAVIA. Yes, I will go; but never to return.
You shall no more be haunted with this Fury.
My lord, my lord, love will not always last,
When urged with long unkindness and disdain.
Take her again whom you prefer to me;
She stays but to be called. Poor cozened man!
Let a feigned parting give her back your heart,
Which a feigned love first got; for injured me,
Tho' my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,
My duty shall be yours.
To the dear pledges of our former love
My tenderness and care shall be transferred,
And they shall cheer, by turns, my widowed nights.
So take my last farewell; for I despair
To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. *Exit*
VENTIDIUS. I combat Heav'n, which blasts my best designs:
My last attempt must be to win her back;
But oh! I fear in vain. *Exit*
ANTONY. Why was I framed with this plain, honest heart,
Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
But bears its workings outward to the world?
I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
And forced a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood;
Octavia had believed it, and had stayed.
But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
Seen to the bottom—all my clearness scorned,
And all my faults exposed.—See where he comes,

Enter DOLLABELLA

Who has prophaned the sacred name of friend,
And worn it into vileness!
With how secure a brow, and specious form,
He gilds the secret villain! Sure that face
Was meant for honesty; but Heav'n mismatched it,
And furnished treason out with nature's pomp,
To make its work more easy.

DOLLABELLA. O my friend!

ANTONY. Well, Dollabella, you performed my message?

DOLLABELLA. I did, unwillingly.

ANTONY. Unwillingly?
Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?
You should have wished it.

DOLLABELLA. Why?

ANTONY. Because you love me.
And she received my message with as true,
With as unfeigned a sorrow as you brought it?

DOLLABELLA. She loves you, ev'n to madness.

ANTONY. Oh, I know it.
You, Dollabella, do not better know
How much she loves me. And should I
Forsake this beauty, this all-perfect creature?

DOLLABELLA. I could not, were she mine.

ANTONY. And yet you first
Persuaded me; how come you altered since?

DOLLABELLA. I said at first I was not fit to go.
I could not hear her sighs and see her tears,
But pity must prevail; and so, perhaps,
It may again with you, for I have promised,
That she should take her last farewell.—And, see,
She comes to claim my word.

Enter CLEOPATRA

ANTONY. False Dollabella!

DOLLABELLA. What's false, my lord?

ANTONY. Why, Dollabella's false,
And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.
Draw near, you well-joined wickedness—you serpents,
Whom I have in my kindly bosom warmed
Till I am stung to death.

DOLLABELLA. My lord, have I
Deserved to be thus used?

CLEOPATRA. Can Heav'n prepare
A newer torment? Can it find a curse
Beyond our separation?

ANTONY. Yes, if fate
Be just, much greater. Heav'n should be ingenious
In punishing such crimes. The rolling stone
And gnawing vulture were slight pains, invented
When Jove was young, and no examples known
Of mighty ills; but you have ripened sin
To such a monstrous growth, 'twill pose the gods
To find an equal torture. Two, two such!—
Oh, there's no farther name,—two such!—to me,
To me, who locked my soul within your breasts,
Had no desires, no joys, no life, but you.
When half the globe was mine, I gave it you
In dowry with my heart; I had no use,
No fruit of all, but you; a friend and mistress
Was what the world could give. O Cleopatra!
O Dollabella! how could you betray
This tender heart, which with an infant-fondness
Lay lulled betwixt your bosoms, and there slept,
Secure of injured faith?

DOLLABELLA. If she has wronged you,
Heav'n, Hell, and you revenge it.

ANTONY. If she wronged me,
Thou wouldst evade thy part of guilt; but swear
Thou lov'st not her.

DOLLABELLA. Not so as I love you.

ANTONY. Not so?—Swear, swear, I say, thou dost not love her.

DOLLABELLA. No more than friendship will allow.

ANTONY. No more?
Friendship allows thee nothing; thou art perjured—
And yet thou didst not swear thou lov'dst her not;
But not so much, no more. O trifling hypocrite,
Who dar'st not own to her, thou dost not love,
Nor own to me, thou dost! Ventidius heard it;
Octavia saw it.
CLEOPATRA. They are enemies.
ANTONY. Alexas is not so: he, he confessed it;
He who next Hell best knew it, he avowed it.
(*To* DOLLABELLA)
Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself?
You, whom I sent to bear my last farewell,
Returned to plead her stay.
DOLLABELLA. What shall I answer?
If to have loved be guilt, then I have sinned;
But if to have repented of that love
Can wash away my crime, I have repented.
Yet, if I have offended past forgiveness,
Let not her suffer; she is innocent.
CLEOPATRA. Ah, what will not a woman do, who loves?
What means will she refuse, to keep that heart
Where all her joys are placed? 'Twas I encouraged,
'Twas I blew up the fire that scorched his soul,
To make you jealous, and by that regain you.
But all in vain; I could not counterfeit.
In spite of all the dams my love broke o'er,
And drowned my heart again. Fate took th'occasion,
And thus one minute's feigning has destroyed
My whole life's truth.
ANTONY. Thin cobweb arts of falsehood,
Seen and broke through at first!
DOLLABELLA. Forgive your mistress.
CLEOPATRA. Forgive your friend.
ANTONY. You have convinced[1] yourselves;
You plead each other's cause. What witness have you,
That you but meant to raise my jealousy?
CLEOPATRA. Ourselves, and Heav'n.
ANTONY. Guilt witnesses for guilt. Hence, love and friendship!
You have no longer place in human breasts;
These two have driv'n you out. Avoid my sight;
I would not kill the man whom I have loved,
And cannot hurt the woman. But avoid me;
I do not know how long I can be tame.
For if I stay one minute more to think
How I am wronged, my justice and revenge
Will cry so loud within me, that my pity
Will not be heard for either.
DOLLABELLA. Heav'n has but
Our sorrow for our sins, and then delights
To pardon erring man. Sweet mercy seems
Its darling attribute, which limits justice;
As if there were degrees in infinite,
And infinite would rather want perfection
Than punish to extent.
ANTONY. I can forgive
A foe, but not a mistress and a friend.
Treason is there in its most horrid shape
Where trust is greatest, and the soul resigned
Is stabbed by its own guards. I'll hear no more;
Hence from my sight forever!
CLEOPATRA. How forever!
I cannot go one moment from your sight,
And must I go forever?
My joys, my only joys, are centered here.
What place have I to go to? my own kingdom?
That I have lost for you.—Or to the Romans?
They hate me for your sake.—Or must I wander
The wide world o'er, a helpless, banished woman—
Banished for love of you—banished from you?
Aye, there's the banishment! Oh, hear me! Hear me,
With strictest justice, for I beg no favor;
And if I have offended you, then kill me,
But do not banish me.
ANTONY. I must not hear you.

[1] convicted.

I have a fool within me takes your part;
But honor stops my ears.
CLEOPATRA. For pity hear me!
Would you cast off a slave who followed you?
Who crouched beneath your spurn?—He has no pity!
See if he gives one tear to my departure,
One look, one kind farewell.—Oh, iron heart!
Let all the gods look down, and judge betwixt us,
If he did ever love!
ANTONY. No more.—Alexas!
DOLLABELLA. A perjured villain!
ANTONY. (*To* CLEOPATRA) Your Alexas—yours.
CLEOPATRA. Oh, 'twas his plot, his ruinous design,
T'engage you in my love by jealousy.
Hear him; confront him with me; let him speak!
ANTONY. I have; I have.
CLEOPATRA. And if he clear me not—
ANTONY. Your creature! one who hangs upon your smiles!
Watches your eye, to say or to unsay
Whate'er you please! I am not to be moved.
CLEOPATRA. Then must we part? Farewell, my cruel lord!
Th'appearance is against me, and I go,
Unjustified, forever from your sight.
How I have loved, you know; how yet I love,
My only comfort is, I know myself.
I love you more, ev'n now you are unkind,
Than when you loved me most; so well, so truly
I'll never strive against it, but die pleased,
To think you once were mine.
ANTONY. Good Heav'n, they weep at parting!
Must I weep too? That calls 'em innocent.
I must not weep; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive.—
Live, but live wretched; 'tis but just you should,
Who made me so. Live from each other's sight;
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth
And all the seas betwixt your sundered loves;
View nothing common but the sun and skies.
Now, all take several ways;
And each your own sad fate, with mine, deplore;
That you were false, and I could trust no more. *Exeunt severally*

ACT V

[*Enter*] CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, [*and*] IRAS

CHARMION. Be juster, Heav'n; such virtue punished thus,
Will make us think that chance rules all above,
And shuffles with a random hand the lots
Which man is forced to draw.
CLEOPATRA. I could tear out these eyes, that gained his heart
And had not power to keep it. Oh, the curse
Of doting on, ev'n when I find it dotage!
Bear witness, gods, you heard him bid me go—
You, whom he mocked with imprecating vows
Of promised faith!—I'll die; I will not bear it.
You may hold me—
(*She pulls out her dagger, and they hold her*)
But I can keep my breath; I can die inward,
And choke this love.

Enter ALEXAS

IRAS. Help, O Alexas, help!
The queen grows desperate; her soul struggles in her
With all the agonies of love and rage,
And strives to force its passage.
CLEOPATRA. Let me go.
Art thou there, traitor?—Oh!
Oh, for a little breath, to vent my rage—
Give, give me way, and let me loose upon him.
ALEXAS. Yes, I deserve it, for my ill-timed truth.

Was it for me to prop
The ruins of a falling majesty?
To place myself beneath the mighty flaw,
Thus to be crushed, and pounded into atoms,
By its o'erwhelming weight? 'Tis too presuming
For subjects to preserve that wilful pow'r
Which courts its own destruction.
CLEOPATRA. I would reason
More calmly with you. Did not you o'errule
And force my plain, direct, and open love
Into these crooked paths of jealousy?
Now, what's th'event? Octavia is removed,
But Cleopatra's banished. Thou, thou, villain,
[Hast] pushed my boat to open sea, to prove,
At my sad cost, if thou canst steer it back.
It cannot be; I'm lost too far—I'm ruined!
Hence, thou impostor, traitor, monster, devil!—
I can no more; thou, and my griefs, have sunk
Me down so low that I want voice to curse thee.
ALEXAS. Suppose some shipwracked seaman near the shore,
Dropping and faint with climbing up the cliff;
If from above some charitable hand
Pull him to safety, hazarding himself
To draw the other's weight, would he look back,
And curse him for his pains? The case is yours;
But one step more, and you have gained the height.
CLEOPATRA. Sunk, never more to rise.
ALEXAS. Octavia's gone, and Dollabella banished.
Believe me, madam, Antony is yours.
His heart was never lost, but started off
To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert,
Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,
And list'ning for the sound that calls it back.
Some other, any man ('tis so advanced),
May perfect this unfinished work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.
CLEOPATRA. Look well thou do't; else—
ALEXAS. Else, what your silence threatens.
—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos, from whose turret
He stands surveying our Egyptian galleys,
Engaged with Cæsar's fleet. Now death or conquest!
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise;
If we o'ercome, the conqueror is yours.
(*A distant shout within*)
CHARMION. Have comfort, madam; did you mark that shout?
(*Second shout nearer*)
IRAS. Hark! they redouble it.
ALEXAS. 'Tis from the port.
The loudness shows it near; good news, kind heavens!
CLEOPATRA. Osiris make it so!

Enter SERAPION

SERAPION. Where, where's the queen?
ALEXAS. How frightfully the holy coward stares!
As if not yet recovered of th'assault,
When all his gods, and, what's more dear to him,
His offerings, were at stake.
SERAPION. Oh, horror, horror!
Egypt has been; our latest hour is come!
The queen of nations, from her ancient seat,
Is sunk forever in the dark abyss.
Time has unrolled her glories to the last,
And now closed up the volume.
CLEOPATRA. Be more plain:
Say whence thou com'st (though fate is in thy face,
Which from thy haggard eyes looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speak'st).
SERAPION. I came from Pharos;
From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy—
CLEOPATRA. Vanquished?
SERAPION. No;
They fought not.

CLEOPATRA. Then they fled!
SERAPION. Nor that. I saw,
With Antony, your well-appointed fleet
Row out; and thrice he waved his hand on high,
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted back.
'Twas then false Fortune, like a fawning strumpet,
About to leave the bankrupt prodigal,
With a dissembled smile would kiss at parting,
And flatter to the last; the well-timed oars,
Now dipped from every bank, now smoothly run
To meet the foe; and soon indeed they met,
But not as foes. In few, we saw their caps
On either side thrown up; th'Egyptian galleys
(Received like friends) passed through, and fell behind
The Roman rear; and now, they all come forward,
And ride within the port.
CLEOPATRA. Enough, Serapion;
I've heard my doom.—This needed not, you gods.
When I lost Antony, your work was done;
'Tis but superfluous malice.—Where's my lord?
How bears he this last blow?
SERAPION. His fury cannot be expressed by words.
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fall'n
Full on his foes, and aimed at Cæsar's galley;
Withheld, he raves on you—cries he's betrayed.
Should he now find you—
ALEXAS. Shun him; seek your safety
Till you can clear your innocence.
CLEOPATRA. I'll stay.
ALEXAS. You must not; haste you to your monument,
While I make speed to Cæsar.
CLEOPATRA. Cæsar! No,
I have no business with him.
ALEXAS. I can work him
To spare your life, and let this madman perish.
CLEOPATRA. Base fawning wretch! wouldst thou betray him too?
Hence from my sight! I will not bear a traitor;
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.
—Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me!
But haste, each moment's precious.
SERAPION. Retire; you must not yet see Antony.
He who began this mischief,
'Tis just he tempt the danger. Let him clear you;
And, since he offered you his servile tongue,
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,
Let him expose that fawning eloquence,
And speak to Antony.
ALEXAS. O heavens! I dare not;
I meet my certain death.
CLEOPATRA. Slave, thou deserv'st it.—
Not that I fear my lord, will I avoid him;
I know him noble. When he banished me,
And thought me false, he scorned to take my life;
But I'll be justified, and then die with him.
ALEXAS. Oh, pity me, and let me follow you!
CLEOPATRA. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou canst,
Now, for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save;
While mine I prize at—this! Come, good Serapion.
Exeunt CLEOPATRA, SERAPION, CHARMION *and* IRAS
ALEXAS. Oh, that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which, like a snow-ball in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasp'd, the faster melts away.
Poor reason! what a wretched aid art thou!
For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think:
What can I say to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.
ANTONY. (*Within*) Which way? where?
VENTIDIUS. (*Within*) This leads to th' monument.
ALEXAS. Ah me! I hear him; yet I'm unprepared.

My gift of lying's gone;
And this court-devil, which I so oft have raised,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay,
Yet cannot far go hence. *Exit*

Enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS

ANTONY. O happy Cæsar! thou hast men to lead.
Think not 'tis thou hast conquered Antony;
But Rome has conquered Egypt. I'm betrayed.
VENTIDIUS. Curse on this treach'rous train!
Their soil and Heav'n infect 'em all with baseness,
And their young souls come tainted to the world
With the first breath they draw.
ANTONY. Th'original villain sure no god created;
He was a bastard of the sun, by Nile,
Aped into man, with all his mother's mud
Crusted about his soul.
VENTIDIUS. The nation is
One universal traitor, and their queen
The very spirit and extract of 'em all.
ANTONY. Is there yet left
A possibility of aid from valor?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction?
The least unmortgaged hope? for, if there be,
Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.
The world's one half is yet in Antony;
And from each limb of it that's hew'd away,
The soul comes back to me.
VENTIDIUS. There yet remain
Three legions in the town: the last assault
Lopped off the rest. If death be your design
(As I must wish it now), these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes,
An honest pile for burial.
ANTONY. They're enough.
We'll not divide our stars, but side by side
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts; so every death
Thou giv'st, I'll take on me as a just debt,
And pay thee back a soul.

VENTIDIUS. Now you shall see I love you. Not a word
Of chiding more. By my few hours of life,
I am so pleased with this brave Roman fate,
That I would not be Cæsar, to outlive you.
When we put off this flesh, and mount together,
I shall be shown to all th'ethereal crowd,—
"Lo, this is he who died with Antony!"
ANTONY. Who knows but we may pierce through all their troops,
And reach my veterans yet? 'Tis worth the tempting,
T'o'erleap this gulf of fate,
And leave our wond'ring destinies behind.

Enter ALEXAS, *trembling*

VENTIDIUS. See, see, that villain!
See Cleopatra stamped upon that face,
With all her cunning, all her arts of falsehood!
How she looks out through those dissembling eyes!
How he has set his count'nance for deceit,
And promises a lie before he speaks!
Let me dispatch him first. (*Drawing*)
ALEXAS. Oh, spare me, spare me!
ANTONY. Hold; he's not worth your killing.—On thy life
(Which thou mayst keep, because I scorn to take it),
No syllable to justify thy queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.
ALEXAS. Sir, she's gone,
Where she shall never be molested more
By love or you.
ANTONY. Fled to her Dollabella!
Die, traitor!—I revoke my promise! die!
(*Going to kill him*)
ALEXAS. Oh, hold! she is not fled.
ANTONY. She is. My eyes
Are open to her falsehood; my whole life
Has been a golden dream of love and friendship.
But, now I wake, I'm like a merchant, roused
From soft repose to see his vessel sinking,
And all his wealth cast o'er. Ingrateful woman!

Who followed me but as the swallow summer,
Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,
Singing her flatt'ries to my morning wake;
But now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,
And seeks the spring of Cæsar.
ALEXAS. Think not so:
Her fortunes have in all things mixed with yours.
Had she betrayed her naval force to Rome,
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe!
VENTIDIUS. She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.
ANTONY. 'Tis too plain;
Else would she have appeared, to clear herself.
ALEXAS. Too fatally she has. She could not bear
To be accused by you, but shut herself
Within her monument; looked down and sigh'd;
While from her unchanged face the silent tears
Dropped, as they had not leave, but stole their parting.
Some undistinguished words she inly murmured;
At last, she raised her eyes; and, with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast—
ANTONY. My heart forebodes—
VENTIDIUS. —All for the best. Go on!
ALEXAS. She snatched her poniard,
And ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plunged it within her breast. Then turned to me:
"Go, bear my lord (said she) my last farewell;
And ask him, if he yet suspect my faith."
More she was saying, but death rushed betwixt.
She half pronounced your name with her last breath,
And buried half within her.
VENTIDIUS. Heav'n be praised!
ANTONY. Then art thou innocent, my poor dear love?
And art thou dead?
Oh, those two words! their sound should be divided!
Hadst thou been false, and died; or hadst thou lived,
And hadst been true—But innocence and death!
This shows not well above. Then what am I,
The murderer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt!
VENTIDIUS. Is't come to this? The gods have been too gracious;
And thus you thank 'em for't!
ANTONY. (*To* ALEXAS) Why stay'st thou here?
Is it for thee to spy upon my soul,
And see its inward mourning? Get thee hence;
Thou art not worthy to behold what now
Becomes a Roman emperor to perform.
ALEXAS. (*Aside*) He loves her still;
His grief betrays it. Good! The joy to find
She's yet alive, completes the reconcilement.
I've saved myself, and her. But, oh! the Romans!
Fate comes too fast upon my wit,
Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double. *Exit*
VENTIDIUS. Would she had died a little sooner, tho',
Before Octavia went; you might have treated.
Now 'twill look tame, and would not be received.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.
ANTONY. I will not fight; there's no more work for war.
The bus'ness of my angry hours is done.
VENTIDIUS. Cæsar is at your gates.
ANTONY. Why, let him enter;
He's welcome now.
VENTIDIUS. What lethargy has crept into your soul?
ANTONY. 'Tis but a scorn of life, and just desire
To free myself from bondage.

VENTIDIUS. Do it bravely.
ANTONY. I will; but not by fighting. O Ventidius!
What should I fight for now? My queen is dead.
I was but great for her; my pow'r, my empire,
Were but my merchandise to buy her love;
And conquered kings, my factors. Now she's dead,
Let Cæsar take the world,—
An empty circle, since the jewel's gone
Which made it worth my strife. My being's nauseous,
For all the bribes of life are gone away.
VENTIDIUS. Would you be taken?
ANTONY. Yes, I would be taken;
But, as a Roman ought,—dead, my Ventidius.
For I'll convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,
And lay down life myself. 'Tis time the world
Should have a lord, and know whom to obey.
We two have kept its homage in suspense,
And bent the globe, on whose each side we trod,
Till it was dinted inwards. Let him walk
Alone upon't; I'm weary of my part.
My torch is out, and the world stands before me,
Like a black desert at th'approach of night;
I'll lay me down, and stray no farther on.
VENTIDIUS. I could be grieved,
But that I'll not outlive you. Choose your death;
For I have seen him in such various shapes—
I care not which I take. I'm only troubled,
The life I bear is worn to such a rag,
'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,
We threw it from us with a better grace;
That, like two lions taken in the toils,
We might at least thrust out our paws, and wound
The hunters that inclose us.
ANTONY. I have thought on't.
Ventidius, you must live.
VENTIDIUS. I must not, sir.
ANTONY. Wilt thou not live, to speak some good of me?
To stand by my fair fame, and guard th'approaches
From the ill tongues of men?
VENTIDIUS. Who shall guard mine,
For living after you?
ANTONY. Say I command it.
VENTIDIUS. If we die well, our deaths will speak themselves
And need no living witness.
ANTONY. Thou hast loved me,
And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Kill me, and take the merit of my death,
To make thee friends with Cæsar.
VENTIDIUS. Thank your kindness.
You said I loved you, and in recompense,
You bid me turn a traitor. Did I think
You would have used me thus?—that I should die
With a hard thought of you?
ANTONY. Forgive me, Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death,
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.
VENTIDIUS. By Heav'n, I will not.
Let it not be t'outlive you.
ANTONY. Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend before thyself.
VENTIDIUS. Give me your hand.
We soon shall meet again. Now, farewell, emperor!— (*Embrace*).
Methinks that word's too cold to be my last.
Since death sweeps all distinctions—farewell, friend!
That's all.—
I will not make a bus'ness of a trifle:
And yet I cannot look on you, and kill you;
Pray turn your face.
ANTONY. I do: strike home, be sure.
VENTIDIUS. Home as my sword will reach. (*Kills himself*)
ANTONY. Oh, thou mistak'st!
That wound was not of thine; give it me back!
Thou robb'st me of my death.

VENTIDIUS. I do indeed;
But think 'tis the first time I e'er deceived you,
If that may plead my pardon.—And, you gods,
Forgive me, if you will; for I die perjured,
Rather than kill my friend. (*Dies*)
ANTONY. Farewell! Ever my leader, ev'n in death!
My queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honor.—Gone so soon?
Is Death no more? He used him carelessly,
With a familiar kindness; ere he knocked,
Ran to the door, and took him in his arms,
As who should say, "Y'are welcome at all hours;
A friend need give no warning." Books had spoiled him;
For all the learn'd are cowards by profession.
'Tis not worth
My farther thought; for death, for aught I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to the satisfied. (*Falls on his sword*)
I've missed my heart. O unperforming hand!
Thou never couldst have erred in a worse time.
My fortune jades me to the last; and death,
Like a great man, takes state, and makes me wait
For my admittance.—
(*Trampling within*)
Some perhaps from Cæsar.
If he should find me living, and suspect
That I played booty with my life! I'll mend
My work ere they can reach me.
(*Rises upon his knees*)

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, [*and*] IRAS

CLEOPATRA. Where is my lord? where is he?
CHARMION. There he lies,
And dead Ventidius by him.
CLEOPATRA. My fears were prophets; I am come too late.
Oh, that accursed Alexas! (*Runs to him*)
ANTONY. Art thou living?
Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me?
CLEOPATRA. Help me seat him.
Send quickly, send for help!
(*They place him in a chair*)
ANTONY. I am answered.
We live both. Sit thee down, my Cleopatra;
I'll make the most I can of life, to stay
A moment more with thee.
CLEOPATRA. How is it with you?
ANTONY. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all packed up,
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot;
And he, for that, returns upon the spur:
So I come back for thee.
CLEOPATRA. Too long, you heav'ns, you have been cruel to me!
Now show your mended faith, and give me back
His fleeting life!
ANTONY. It will not be, my love;
I keep my soul by force.
Say but thou art not false.
CLEOPATRA. 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true: I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feigned my death;
Which, when I knew, I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betrayed
Both you and me.
ANTONY. And Dollabella—
CLEOPATRA. Scarce
Esteemed before he loved, but hated now.
ANTONY. Enough: my life's not long enough for more.
Thou sayst thou wilt come after. I believe thee;
For I can now believe whate'er thou sayst,
That we may part more kindly.
CLEOPATRA. I will come:
Doubt not, my life, I'll come, and quickly too.
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.
ANTONY. But grieve not, while thou stayst,
My last disastrous times;
Think we have had a clear and glorious day,
And Heav'n did kindly to delay the storm,
Just till our close of ev'ning. Ten years' love,
And not a moment lost, but all improved
To th'utmost joys.—What ages have we lived!

And now to die each other's; and so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about us,
And all the train be ours.
CLEOPATRA. Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love?
ANTONY. No, not a minute.—This one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar. (*Dies*)
CLEOPATRA. Oh, tell me so again,
And take ten thousand kisses for that word.
My lord, my lord!—speak, if you yet have being;
Sigh to me, if you cannot speak—or cast
One look! Do anything that shows you live.
IRAS. He's gone too far to hear you;
And this you see, a lump of senseless clay,
The leavings of a soul.
CHARMION. Remember, madam,
He charged you not to grieve.
CLEOPATRA. And I'll obey him.
I have not loved a Roman not to know
What should become his wife—his wife, my Charmion;
For 'tis to that high title I aspire,
And now I'll not die less. Let dull Octavia
Survive, to mourn him dead: my nobler fate
Shall knit our spousals with a tie too strong
For Roman laws to break.
IRAS. Will you then die?
CLEOPATRA. Why shouldst thou make that question?
IRAS. Cæsar is merciful.
CLEOPATRA. Let him be so
To those who want his mercy; my poor lord
Made no such cov'nant with him, to spare me
When he was dead. Yield me to Cæsar's pride?
What! to be led in triumph through the streets,
A spectacle to base plebeian eyes,
While some dejected friend of Antony's,
Close in a corner, shakes his head, and mutters
A secret curse on her who ruined him?
I'll none of that.
CHARMION. Whatever you resolve,
I'll follow, ev'n to death.
IRAS. I only feared
For you, but more should fear to live without you.
CLEOPATRA. Why, now 'tis as it should be. Quick, my friends,
Dispatch; ere this, the town's in Cæsar's hands.
My lord looks down concerned, and fears my stay,
Lest I should be surprised;
Keep him not waiting for his love too long.
You, Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels;
With 'em, the wreath of victory I made
(Vain augury!) for him who now lies dead.
You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills.
IRAS. The aspics, madam?
CLEOPATRA. Must I bid you twice?
Exeunt CHARMION *and* IRAS
'Tis sweet to die when they would force life on me—
To rush into the dark abode of Death,
And seize him first; if he be like my love,
He is not frightful, sure.
We're now alone, in secrecy and silence;
And is not this like lovers? I may kiss
These pale, cold lips; Octavia does not see me;
And, oh! 'tis better far to have him thus,
Than see him in her arms.—

Enter CHARMION [*and*] IRAS

Oh, welcome, welcome!
CHARMION. What must be done?
CLEOPATRA. Short ceremony, friends;
But yet it must be decent. First, this laurel
Shall crown my hero's head. He fell not basely,
Nor left his shield behind him.—Only thou
Couldst triumph o'er thyself, and thou alone
Wert worthy so to triumph.
CHARMION. To what end
These ensigns of your pomp and royalty?

CLEOPATRA. Dull that thou art! why, 'tis to meet my love.
As when I saw him first, on Cydnos bank,
All sparkling, like a goddess, so adorned,
I'll find him once again; my second spousals
Shall match my first in glory. Haste, haste, both,
And dress the bride of Antony.
CHARMION. —'Tis done.
CLEOPATRA. Now seat me by my lord. I claim this place;
For I must conquer Cæsar too, like him,
And win my share o'th' world.—Hail, you dear relics
Of my immortal love!
Oh, let no impious hand remove you hence,
But rest forever here! Let Egypt give
His death that peace, which it denied his life.—
Reach me the casket.
IRAS. Underneath the fruit
The aspic lies.
CLEOPATRA. (*Putting aside the leaves*)
Welcome, thou kind deceiver!
Thou best of thieves, who with an easy key
Dost open life, and, unperceived by us,
Ev'n steal us from ourselves; discharging so
Death's dreadful office better than himself;
Touching our limbs so gently into slumber,
That Death stands by, deceived by his own image,
And thinks himself but Sleep.
SERAPION. (*Within*) The queen—where is she?
The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.
CLEOPATRA. He comes too late t'invade the rights of death.
Haste, bare my arm, and rouse the serpent's fury.
(*Holds out her arm, and draws it back*)
Coward flesh,
Wouldst thou conspire with Cæsar to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to't,
And not be sent by him,
But bring, myself, my soul to Antony.
(*Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody*)
Take hence; the work is done.
SERAPION. (*Within*) Break ope the door,
And guard the traitor well.
CHARMION. The next is ours.
IRAS. Now, Charmion, to be worthy
Of our great queen and mistress.
(*They apply the aspics*)
CLEOPATRA. Already, death, I feel thee in my veins.
I go with such a will to find my lord,
That we shall quickly meet.
A heavy numbness creeps through every limb,
And now 'tis at my head; my eyelids fall,
And my dear love is vanished in a mist.
—Where shall I find him—where? Oh, turn me to him,
And lay me on his breast!—Cæsar, thy worst;
Now part us, if thou canst. (*Dies*)
(IRAS *sinks down at her feet, and dies;* CHARMION *stands behind her chair, as dressing her head*)

Enter SERAPION, *two* Priests, ALEXAS *bound*, Egyptians

2 PRIESTS. Behold, Serapion,
What havoc Death has made!
SERAPION. 'Twas what I feared.—
Charmion, is this well done?
CHARMION. Yes, 'tis well done, and like a queen, the last
Of her great race.—I follow her.
(*Sinks down: dies*)
ALEXAS. 'Tis true,
She has done well. Much better thus to die,
Than live to make a holiday in Rome.
SERAPION. See, see how the lovers sit in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
Th'impression of a smile, left in her face,
Shows she died pleased with him for whom she lived,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just ent'ring: grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain,[1] as our pledge of safety.

[1] I.e. Alexas.

To grace th'imperial triumph.—Sleep, blest pair,
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb;
And fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers lived so great, or died so well.
Exeunt

EPILOGUE

Poets, like disputants, when reasons fail,
Have one sure refuge left—and that's to rail.
Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thundered through the pit;
And this is all their equipage of wit.
We wonder how the devil this diff'rence grows,
Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in prose;
For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
The threadbare author hates the gaudy coat;
And swears at the gilt coach, but swears a-foot.
For 'tis observed of every scribbling man,
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can;
Prunes up, and asks his oracle, the glass,
If pink or purple best become his face.
For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor prays;
Nor likes your wit just as you like his plays;
He has not yet so much of Mr. Bays.[1]
He does his best; and if he cannot please,
Would quietly sue out his writ of ease.
Yet, if he might his own grand jury call,
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Cæsar's pow'r the men's ambition move,
But grace you him who lost the world for love!
Yet if some antiquated lady say,
The last age is not copied in his play;
Heav'n help the man who for that face must drudge,
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with those;
For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
Young wits and sparks he to his aid must call;
'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.

1 I.e. Dryden.

VENICE PRESERVED; OR, A PLOT DISCOVERED

A Tragedy by Thomas Otway

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Duke of Venice
Priuli, father to Belvidera, a senator
Antonio, a fine speaker in the Senate
[Bedamar,[1] the Spanish ambassador]
Jaffeir
Pierre
Renault
Spinosa
Theodore
Eliot
Revillido
Durand } conspirators
Mezzana
Brainveil
Ternon
[Retrosi]
Brabe

Belvidera
Aquilina
Two Women, attendants on Belvidera
Two Women, servants to Aquilina

The Council of Ten
Officer
Guards
Friar
Executioner and Rabble

[Scene: *Venice*]

[Time: 1618]

EPISTLE DEDICATORY

To her Grace the Duchess of Portsmouth

Madam,

Were it possible for me to let the world know how entirely your Grace's goodness has devoted a poor man to your service; were there words enough in speech to express the mighty sense I have of your great bounty towards me; surely I should write and talk of it forever: but your Grace has given me so large a theme, and laid so very vast a foundation, that imagination wants stock to build upon it. I am as one dumb when I would speak of it, and when I strive to write, I want a scale of thought sufficient to comprehend the height of it.

Forgive me then, Madam, if (as a poor peasant once made a present of an apple to an emperor) I bring this small tribute, the humble growth of my little garden, and lay it at your feet. Believe it is paid you with the utmost gratitude; believe that so long as I have thought to remember how very much I owe your generous nature, I will ever have a heart that shall be grateful for it too. Your Grace, next Heaven, deserves it amply from me; that gave me life, but on a hard condition, till your extended favor taught me to prize the gift, and took the heavy burden it was clogged with from me—I mean hard fortune. When I had enemies that with malicious power kept back and shaded me from those royal beams, whose warmth is all I have, or hope to live by, your noble pity and compassion found me where I was far cast backward from my blessing, down in the rear of fortune, called me up, placed me in the shine, and I have felt its comfort. You have in that restored me to my native right, for a steady faith and loyalty to my prince was all the inheritance my father left me, and however hardly my ill fortune deal with me, 'tis what I prize so well that I ne'er pawned it yet, and hope I ne'er shall part with it.

Nature and Fortune were certainly in league when you were born, and as the first took care to give you beauty enough to enslave the hearts of all the world, so the other resolved, to do its merit justice, that none but a monarch, fit to rule that world, should e'er possess it, and in it he had an empire. The young prince you have

1 In Q1 listed as a conspirator.

given him, by his blooming virtues early declares the mighty stock he came from; and as you have taken all the pious care of a dear mother and a prudent guardian to give him a noble and generous education, may it succeed according to his merits and your wishes: may he grow up to be a bulwark to his illustrious father, and a patron to his loyal subjects, with wisdom and learning to assist him whenever called to his councils, to defend his right against the encroachments of republicans in his senates, to cherish such men as shall be able to vindicate the royal cause, that good and fit servants to the crown may never be lost for want of a protector. May he have courage and conduct, fit to fight his battles abroad and terrify his rebels at home; and that all these may be yet more sure, may he never, during the spring-time of his years, when those growing virtues ought with care to be cherished, in order to their ripening, may he never meet with vicious natures, or the tongues of faithless, sordid, insipid flatterers, to blast 'em. To conclude: may he be as great as the hand of Fortune (with his honor) shall be able to make him; and may your Grace, who are so good a mistress, and so noble a patroness, never meet with a less grateful servant, than,

Madam,
Your Grace's entirely
devoted creature,
Thomas Otway

PROLOGUE

In these distracted times, when each man dreads
The bloody stratagems of busy heads;
When we have feared three years we know not what,
Till witnesses begin to die o'th' rot,
What made our poet meddle with a plot?
Was't that he fancied, for the very sake
And name of plot, his trifling play might take?
For there's not in't one inch-board evidence,
But 'tis, he says, to reason plain and sense;
And that he thinks a plausible defence.
Were truth by sense and reason to be tried,
Sure all our swearers might be laid aside:
No, of such tools our author has no need,
To make his plot, or make his play succeed;
He, of black Bills, has no prodigious tales,
Or Spanish pilgrims cast a-shore in Wales;
Here's not one murthered magistrate at least,
Kept rank like ven'son for a city feast,
Grown four days stiff, the better to prepare
And fit his pliant limbs to ride in chair:
Yet here's an army raised, though underground,
But no man seen, nor one commission found;
Here is a traitor too, that's very old,
Turbulent, subtle, mischievous, and bold,
Bloody, revengeful, and to crown his part,
Loves fumbling with a wench, with all his heart;
Till after having many changes passed,
In spite of age (thanks Heaven) is hanged at last:
Next is a senator that keeps a whore,
In Venice none a higher office bore;
To lewdness every night the lecher ran—
Show me, all London, such another man;
Match him at Mother Creswold's if you can.
Oh, Poland, Poland! had it been thy lot,
T'have heard in time of this Venetian plot,
Thou surely chosen hadst one king from thence,
And honored them as thou hast England since.

ACT I

SCENE I. [*A street of the city*]

Enter PRIULI *and* JAFFEIR

PRIULI. No more! I'll hear no more; begone and leave.

JAFFEIR. Not hear me! by my sufferings, but you shall!
My lord, my lord; I'm not that abject wretch
You think me. Patience! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear me!

PRIULI. Have you not wronged me?

JAFFEIR. Could my nature e'er
Have brooked injustice or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself,
To gain a hearing from a cruel father!
Wronged you?
PRIULI. Yes! wronged me, in the nicest point—
The honor of my house: you have done me wrong.
You may remember (for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness) when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes as made you looked on
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation,
Pleased with your growing virtue, I received you—
Courted, and sought to raise you to your merits.
My house, my table—nay, my fortune, too,
My very self, was yours; you might have used me
To your best service. Like an open friend,
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
When in requital of my best endeavors,
You treacherously practised to undo me,
Seduced the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
Oh, Belvidera!
JAFFEIR. 'Tis to me you owe her;
Childless you had been else, and in the grave,
Your name extinct, nor no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past
Since in your brigandine you sailed to see
The Adriatic wedded by our Duke,
And I was with you. Your unskilful pilot
Dashed us upon a rock. When to your boat
You made for safety, entrèd first yourself.
The affrighted Belvidera following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel side,
Was by a wave washed off into the deep;
When instantly I plunged into the sea,
And buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeemed her life with half the loss of mine.
Like a rich conquest in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dashed the saucy waves
That thronged and pressed to rob me of my prize:
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms.
Indeed you thanked me: but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul; for from that hour she loved me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.
PRIULI. You stole her from me! Like a thief you stole her,
At dead of night; that cursèd hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false like mine!
A sterile fortune and a barren bed
Attend you both; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous; still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you, till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.
JAFFEIR. Half of your curse you have bestowed in vain;
Heav'n has already crowned our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty.
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father!
PRIULI. Rather live
To bait[1] thee for his bread and din your ears
With hungry cries, whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.
JAFFEIR. You talk as if it would please you.
PRIULI. 'Twould, by Heav'n!
Once she was dear indeed; the drops that fell
From my sad heart when she forgot her duty,
The fountain of my life was not so precious.
But she is gone; and if I am a man,
I will forget her.
JAFFEIR. Would I were in my grave!
PRIULI. And she, too, with thee;
For, living here, you're but my curs'd remembrancers
I once was happy.

[1] annoy.

JAFFEIR. You use me thus because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
My life feeds on her; therefore thus you treat me.
Oh! could my soul ever have known satiety!
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my Fortune where she would be kinder!

PRIULI. You dare not do't.—

JAFFEIR. Indeed, my lord, I dare not;
My heart that awes me is too much my master.
Three years are past since first our vows were plighted,
During which time, the world must bear me witness,
I have treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice;
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance
Due to her birth, she always has commanded.
Out of my little fortune I have done this,
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see, I loved her for herself,
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli.—

PRIULI. No more!

JAFFEIR. Yes! all, and then adieu forever!
There's not a wretch that lives on common charity
But's happier than me. For I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never waked but to a joyful morning:
Yet now must fall like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scaped, yet's withered in the ripening.

PRIULI. Home and be humble; study to retrench.
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly;
Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds,[1] fit for thy little state.
Then to some suburb cottage both retire;
Drudge, to feed loathsome life; get brats, and starve—
Home, home, I say! *Exit* PRIULI

JAFFEIR. Yes, if my heart would let me—
This proud, this swelling heart. Home I would go
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Filled and dammed up with gaping creditors,
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring.
I have now not fifty ducats in the world;
Yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin.
O Belvidera! oh, she's my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE

PIERRE. My friend, good morrow!
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
—What, melancholy? not a word to spare me?

JAFFEIR. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damned starving quality
Called honesty, got footing in the world.

PIERRE. Why, pow'rful villainy first set it up,
For its own ease and safety: honest men
Are the soft, easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards: each man would kill his brother
Himself; none would be paid or hanged for murder.
Honesty was a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold, deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontrolled above their betters.

JAFFEIR. Then honesty is but a notion.

PIERRE. Nothing else;
Like wit, much talked of, not to be defined.
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't;

[1] garments.

'Tis a ragged virtue. Honesty!—no more on't.
JAFFEIR. Sure, thou art honest!
PIERRE. So indeed men think me.
But they're mistaken, Jaffeir; I am a rogue
As well as they—
A fine, gay, bold-faced villain, as thou seest me.
'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed. I'd not betray my friend,
To get his place or fortune. I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch beneath me.
Yet, Jaffeir, for all this, I am a villain!
JAFFEIR. A villain—
PIERRE. Yes, a most notorious villain.
To see the suff'rings of my fellow creatures
And own myself a man; to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of!
They say by them our hands are free from fetters:
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
Drive us like wracks down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains; and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of Nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That makes us slaves and tells us 'tis our charter.
JAFFEIR. O Aquilina! Friend, to lose such beauty,
The dearest purchase of thy noble labors!
She was thy right by conquest, as by love.
PIERRE. O Jaffeir! I'd so fixed my heart upon her
That wheresoe'er I framed a scheme of life
For time to come, she was my only joy
With which I wished to sweeten future cares.
I fancied pleasures none but one that loves
And dotes as I did can imagine like 'em.
When in the extremity of all these hopes,
In the most charming hour of expectation;
Then when our eager wishes soar the highest,
Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely game,
A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
With his foul wings sailed in and spoiled my quarry.
JAFFEIR. I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st him.
PIERRE. Curse on the common good that's so protected,
Where every slave that heaps up wealth enough
To do much wrong, becomes a lord of right!
I, who believ'd no ill could e'er come near me,
Found in the embraces of my Aquilina
A wretched, old, but itching senator;
A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title,
A rogue that uses beauty like a lambskin,
Barely to keep him warm. That filthy cuckoo, too,
Was in my absence crept into my nest,
And spoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.
JAFFEIR. Didst thou not chase him thence?
PIERRE. I did; and drove
The rank old bearded Hirco stinking home.
The matter was complained of in the Senate;
I, summoned to appear, and censured basely,
For violating something they call "privilege"—
This was the recompense of my service.
Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward!
A soldier's mistress, Jaffeir, 's his religion;
When that's profaned, all other ties are broken:
That even dissolves all former bonds of service,
And from that hour I think myself as free
To be the foe as ere the friend of Venice.
Nay, dear Revenge, whene'er thou call'st I am ready.
JAFFEIR. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou to live

In such a wretched state as this of Venice—
Where all agree to spoil the public good,
And villains fatten with the brave man's labors.
PIERRE. We have neither safety, unity, nor peace,
For the foundation's lost of common good;
Justice is lame as well as blind amongst us;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up to enslave us deeper.
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right! O Jaffeir! then mightst thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face;
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak! But my heart bleeds this moment!
JAFFEIR. Curs'd be the cause, though I thy friend be part on't!
Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am used to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.
PIERRE. Too soon it will reach thy knowledge—
JAFFEIR. Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue[1] in thy friendship
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.
PIERRE. Then, thou art ruined!
JAFFEIR. That I long since knew;
I and Ill-fortune have been long acquaintance.
PIERRE. I passed this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains.
The sons of public rapine were destroying;
They told me, by the sentence of the law
They had commission to seize all thy fortune—
Nay, more; Priuli's cruel hand hath signed it.

1 power.

Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale.
There was another making villainous jests
At thy undoing. He had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient, most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings intermixed and wrought with gold;
The very bed, which on thy wedding night
Received thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.
JAFFEIR. Now thanks, Heav'n—
PIERRE. Thank Heav'n! for what?
JAFFEIR. That I am not worth a ducat.
PIERRE. Curse thy dull stars and the worst fate of Venice!
Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no trust, no truth; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression, and Vice lords it.
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doomed to banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through tears, like April suns in showers
That labor to o'ercome the cloud that loads'm;
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she leaned,
Kindly looked up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catched the sorrows that fell from her!
Even the lewd rabble that were gathered round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her,
Governed their roaring throats, and grumbled pity.
I could have hugged the greasy rogues; they pleased me.
JAFFEIR. I thank thee for this story from my soul,

Since now I know the worst that can befall me.
Ah, Pierre! I have a heart that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward. Bear my weakness,
If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows!
PIERRE. Burn!
First burn, and level Venice to thy ruin!
What, starve like beggar's brats in frosty weather
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death?
Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee.
Command my heart: thou art every way its master.
JAFFEIR. No! There's a secret pride in bravely dying.
PIERRE. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow—
Revenge! the attribute of gods. They stamped it
With their great image on our natures. Die!
Consider well the cause that calls upon thee,
And, if thou art base enough, die then; remember
Thy Belvidera suffers. Belvidera!
Die—damn first! What, be decently interred
In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues that rot in dirty winding sheets—
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o'th' soil?
JAFFEIR. Oh!
PIERRE. Well said! out with't; swear a little—
JAFFEIR. Swear!
By sea and air, by earth, by Heaven and hell,
I will revenge my Belvidera's tears!
Hark thee, my friend; Priuli—is—a senator!
PIERRE. A dog!
JAFFEIR. Agreed.
PIERRE. Shoot him!
JAFFEIR. With all my heart!
No more: where shall we meet at night?
PIERRE. I'll tell thee.
On the Rialto every night at twelve
I take my evening's walk of meditation;
There we two will meet, and talk of precious Mischief—
JAFFEIR. Farewell.
PIERRE. At twelve.
JAFFEIR. At any hour; my plagues
Will keep me waking.

Exit PIERRE

Tell me why, good Heav'n,
Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,
Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires
That fill the happiest man? Ah! rather why
Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate—
Base minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens?
Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?
Is this just dealing, Nature?—Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA [*with* Attendants]

Poor Belvidera!
BELVIDERA. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
To that kind voice!—My lord, my love, my refuge!
Happy my eyes when they behold thy face;
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightful joys.
Oh, smile, as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul!
JAFFEIR. As when our loves
Were in their spring? Has then my fortune changed?
Art thou not, Belvidera, still the same—
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?
If thou art altered, where shall I have harbor?
Where ease my loaded heart? oh! where complain?

BELVIDERA. Does this appear like change, or love decaying,
When thus I throw myself into thy bosom
With all the resolution of a strong truth?
Beats not my heart as 'twould alarm thine
To a new charge of bliss? I joy more in thee
Than did thy mother when she hugged thee first,
And blessed the gods for all her travail past.
JAFFEIR. Can there in women be such glorious faith?
Sure, all ill stories of thy sex are false.
Oh, woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man; we had been brutes without you.
Angels are painted fair, to look like you;
There's in you all that we believe of Heav'n—
Amazing brightness, purity and truth,
Eternal joy and everlasting love.
BELVIDERA. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich;
I have so much, my heart will surely break with't.
Vows cannot express it when I would declare
How great's my joy; I am dumb with the big thought.
I swell, and sigh, and labor with my longing.
Oh, lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent; where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens and every list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love with kisses, kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.
JAFFEIR. O Belvidera! double I am a beggar—
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want! worldly want! that hungry, meager fiend
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Framed for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banished by our miseries abroad,
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
(In some far climate where our names are strangers)
For charitable succor; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads—
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?
BELVIDERA. Oh, I will love thee—even in madness love thee.
Tho' my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals when my poor heart
Should 'suage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Tho' the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some clift our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thy head;
And as thou sighing li'st, and swelled with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.
JAFFEIR. Hear this, you heavens, and wonder how you made her!
—Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world!
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine.
Like gaudy ships, th'obsequious billows fall
And rise again, to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm and then devour you:
I, in my private bark, already wrecked,
Like a poor merchant driven on unknown land,
That had by chance packed up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and saved only that,
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store;
Resolved to scorn, and trust my fate no more.

Exeunt

ACT II

[SCENE I. AQUILINA'S *house*]

Enter PIERRE *and* AQUILINA

AQUILINA. By all thy wrongs, thou art dearer to my arms
Than all the wealth of Venice; prithee, stay
And let us love to-night.
PIERRE. No: there's fool,
There's fool about thee. When a woman sells
Her flesh to fools, her beauty's lost to me;
They leave a taint, a sully where th'ave passed;
There's such a baneful quality about 'em,
Even spoils complexions with their own nauseousness.
They infect all they touch; I cannot think
Of tasting anything a fool has palled.
AQUILINA. I loathe and scorn that fool thou mean'st, as much
Or more than thou canst. But the beast has gold
That makes him necessary; power too,
To qualify my character, and poise me
Equal with peevish Virtue, that beholds
My liberty with envy. In their hearts,
Are loose as I am; but an ugly power
Sits in their faces, and frights pleasures from 'em.
PIERRE. Much good may't do you, madam, with your senator.
AQUILINA. My senator! why, canst thou think that wretch
E'er filled thy Aquilina's arms with pleasure?
Think'st thou, because I sometimes give him leave
To foil himself at what he is unfit for,
Because I force myself to endure and suffer him,
Think'st thou I love him? No, by all the joys
Thou ever gav'st me, his presence is my penance;
The worst thing an old man can be's a lover—
A mere *memento mori*[1] to poor woman.
I never lay by his decrepit side
But all that night I pondered on my grave.
PIERRE. Would he were well sent thither!
AQUILINA. That's my wish, too;
For then, my Pierre, I might have cause with pleasure
To play the hypocrite. Oh! how I could weep
Over the dying dotard, and kiss him too,
In hopes to smother him quite; then, when the time
Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral—
For he has already made me heir to treasures
Would make me out-act a real widow's whining—
How could I frame my face to fit my mourning!
With wringing hands attend him to his grave;
Fall swooning on his hearse[2]; take mad possession
Even of the dismal vault where he lay buried;
There like the Ephesian matron dwell, till thou,
My lovely soldier, comest to my deliverance;
Then throwing up my veil, with open arms
And laughing eyes, run to new dawning joy.
PIERRE. No more! I have friends to meet me here to-night,
And must be private. As you prize my friendship,
Keep up[3] your coxcomb: let him not pry nor listen
Nor fisk[4] about the house as I have seen him,
Like a tame, mumping[5] squirrel with a bell on.
Curs will be abroad to bite him if you do.
AQUILINA. What friends to meet? may I not be of your council?
PIERRE. How! a woman ask questions out of bed?
Go to your senator! Ask him what passes
Amongst his brethren; he'll hide nothing from you.
But pump not me for politics.—No more!
Give order that whoever in my name

1 remember to die; a warning of death.
2 bier.
3 confine.
4 run.
5 grimacing.

Comes here, receive admittance; so, good night.
AQUILINA. Must we ne'er meet again? Embrace no more?
Is love so soon and utterly forgotten?
PIERRE. As you henceforward treat your fool, I'll think on't.
AQUILINA. [*Aside*] Cursed be all fools, and doubly cursed myself,
The worst of fools.—I die if he forsakes me;
And how to keep him, Heav'n or Hell instruct me. *Exeunt*

SCENE [II]. *The Rialto*

Enter JAFFEIR

JAFFEIR. I am here, and thus, the shades of night around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely, 'tis so with me;
For every step I tread methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches like myself
Have wandered out at this dead time of night
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk:
Sure, I am so cursed that, tho' of Heav'n forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell! Hell! why sleepest thou?

Enter PIERRE

PIERRE. [*Aside*] Sure, I have stayed too long;
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
—Speak, who goes there?
JAFFEIR. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he that asks the question?
PIERRE. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,
And ne'er betray their masters; never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend.
—Jaffeir!
JAFFEIR. The same. O Pierre! thou art come in season:
I was just going to pray.
PIERRE. Ah, that's mechanic[1];
Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by it, too.
No praying; it spoils business, and time's precious.
Where's Belvidera?
JAFFEIR. For a day or two
I've lodged her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do with me. Prithee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera—
PIERRE. Speak not of her?
JAFFEIR. Oh, no!
PIERRE. Nor name her? May be, I wish her well.
JAFFEIR. Who well?
PIERRE. Thy wife, thy lovely Belvidera.
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done!
JAFFEIR. Y'are merry, Pierre!
PIERRE. I am so.
Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile;
We'll all rejoice.
[*Offering gold*]
Here's something to buy pins;
Marriage is chargeable.
JAFFEIR. [*Aside*] I but half wished
To see the devil, and he's here already.
—Well!
What must this buy, rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me which way I must be damned for this.
PIERRE. When last we parted, we had no qualms like these,
But entertained each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reformed since our last meeting? What new miracles
Have happened? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?

[1] vulgar.

JAFFEIR. Kind Heav'n! let heavy curses
Gall his old age! cramps, aches, rack his bones;
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart!
Oh, let him live till life become his burden;
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease but late!
PIERRE. Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretched the curse to all
The Senate round, as to one single villain?
JAFFEIR. But curses stick not. Could I kill with cursing,
By Heav'n, I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted! Senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills, but their wives and daughters
Die of their own diseases. Oh, for a curse
To kill with!
PIERRE. Daggers, daggers, are much better.
JAFFEIR. Ha!
PIERRE. Daggers.
JAFFEIR. But where are they?
PIERRE. Oh, a thousand
May be disposed in honest hands in Venice.
JAFFEIR. Thou talk'st in clouds.
PIERRE. But yet a heart half wronged
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffeir.
JAFFEIR. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
And have not I a friend will stick one here?
PIERRE. Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherished
To a nobler purpose, I'd be that friend.
But thou hast better friends—friends whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends—friends worthy to be called so.
I'll trust thee with a secret; there are spirits
This hour at work. But as thou art a man
Whom I have picked and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I have told thee that which only gods
And men like gods are privy to, then swear
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.
JAFFEIR. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths?
—(Green-sickness girls lose maiden-heads with such counters)—
For thou art so near my heart that thou mayst see
Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee.
Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for Honor's toughest task,
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villainous, inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.
PIERRE. Nay, it's a cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffeir,
For it is founded on the noblest basis—
Our liberties, our natural inheritance.
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't:
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't;
Openly act a deed the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when it is done.
JAFFEIR. For liberty?
PIERRE. For liberty, my friend.
Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequestred fortunes healed again.
I shall be freed from opprobrious wrongs
That press me now and bend my spirit downward.
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right: fools shall be pulled
From Wisdom's seat—those baleful, unclean birds,
Those lazy-owls, who (perched near fortune's top)
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledged virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.
JAFFEIR. What can I do?

PIERRE. Canst thou not kill a senator?
JAFFEIR. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him
For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had, and the brave story warms me.
PIERRE. Swear then!
JAFFEIR. I do, by all those glittering stars
And yond great, ruling planet of the night!
By all good powers above and ill below,
By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
No pow'r or death shall make me false to thee!
PIERRE. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead thee!
But be a man, for thou art to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest.
JAFFEIR. I give thee thanks
For this kind warning. Yes, I will be a man,
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou see'st my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.
Come, let's begone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom. Vengeance shall have room—
Revenge!
PIERRE. And liberty!
JAFFEIR. Revenge! revenge—
Exeunt

[SCENE III.] *The scene changes to* [*the*] *house* [*of* AQUILINA], *the Greek courtesan*

Enter RENAULT

RENAULT. Why was my choice ambition the first ground
A wretch can build on? It's indeed at distance
A good prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to Heav'n.
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us!
—Who's there?

Enter SPINOSA

SPINOSA. Renault, good morrow! for by this time
I think the scale of night has turned the balance
And weighs up morning. Has the clock struck twelve?
RENAULT. Yes, clocks will go as they are set. But man,
Irregular man, 's ne'er constant, never certain.
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mixed, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolved.
SPINOSA. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten.
RENAULT. What's then the cause that I am here alone?
Why are we not together?

Enter ELIOT

—O sir, welcome!
You are an Englishman: when treason's hatching
One might have thought you'd not have been behindhand.
In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef and a sea-coal fire, he's yours forever.
ELIOT. Frenchman, you are saucy.
RENAULT. How!

Enter BEDAMAR *the ambassador*, THEODORE, BRAINVEIL, DURAND, BRABE, REVILLIDO, MÉZZANA, TERNON, RETROSI, Conspirators

BEDAMAR. At difference?—fy!
Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues

Fall out and brawl: should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this great assembly as in one great jewel,
T'adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smiled on—
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles?

RENAULT. Boys!

BEDAMAR. Renault, thy hand!

RENAULT. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here,
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

BEDAMAR. Eliot, thou once hadst virtue; I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted. 'Tis thy nation's glory,
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
Once more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace.
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis!
Totters it not already?

ELIOT. Would it were tumbling.

BEDAMAR. Nay, it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter PIERRE

—O Pierre! thou art welcome!
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. Oh, my Mars!
The poets that first feigned a god of war
Sure prophesied of thee.

PIERRE. Friends! was not Brutus,
(I mean that Brutus who in open Senate
Stabbed the first Cæsar that usurped the world)
A gallant man?

RENAULT. Yes, and Catiline too,
Tho' story wrong his fame; for he conspired
To prop the reeling glory of his country.
His cause was good.

BEDAMAR. And ours as much above it
As, Renault, thou art superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

PIERRE. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? or must we talk forever?

BEDAMAR. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth. Fate seems to have set
The business up and given it to our care.
I hope there's not a heart nor hand amongst us
But is firm and ready.

ALL. All! We'll die with Bedamar.

BEDAMAR. O men,
Matchless as will your glory be hereafter!
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

RENAULT. What can lose it?
The public stock's a beggar; one Venetian
Trusts not another. Look into their stores
Of general safety—empty magazines;
A tattered fleet, a murmuring, unpaid army,
Bankrupt nobility, a harassed commonalty,
A factious, giddy, and divided Senate
Is all the strength of Venice. Let's destroy it.
Let's fill their magazines with arms to awe them,
Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain it;
Let loose the murmuring army on their masters,
To pay themselves with plunder; lop their nobles
To the base roots, whence most of 'em first sprung;
Enslave the rout, whom[1] smarting will make humble;
Turn out their droning Senate, and possess
That seat of empire which our souls were framed for.

PIERRE. Ten thousand men are armèd at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world;
This wretched state has starved them in its service,
And by your bounty quickened, they're resolved

1 Q1 *whose*.

To serve your glory and revenge their own!
Th'have all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th'alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.
BEDAMAR. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease.
After this night it is resolved we meet
No more, till Venice own us for her lords.
PIERRE. How lovely the Adriatic whore,
Dressed in her flames, will shine!—devouring flames,
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom
And hiss in her foundation!
BEDAMAR. Now if any
Amongst us that owns this glorious cause
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told. The general doom is sealed,
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.
PIERRE. I must confess you there have touched my weakness:
I have a friend; hear it, such a friend!
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you:
He knows the very business of this hour,
But he rejoices in the cause and loves it:
W'have changed a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.
RENAULT. How! all betrayed?
PIERRE. No—I've dealt nobly with you;
I've brought my all into the public stock.
I had but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you!
Receive and cherish him: or if, when seen
And searched, you find him worthless, as my tongue
Has lodged this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again and give you rest.
—Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of!

Enter JAFFEIR *with a dagger*

BEDAMAR. His presence bears the show of manly virtue.
JAFFEIR. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncalled
I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I am amongst you, and by Heav'n it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curs'd, assembled Senate:
It shrinks not, tho' I meet a father there.
Would you behold this city flaming? Here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To the arsenal, and set its gates on fire.
RENAULT. You talk this well, sir.
JAFFEIR. Nay—by Heav'n, I'll do this!
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces:
You fear me a villain, and indeed it's odd
To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
Of matters that have been so well debated;
But I come ripe with wrongs as you with councils.
I hate this Senate, am a foe to Venice—
A friend to none but men resolved like me
To push on mischief. Oh, did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!
BEDAMAR. Pierre!—I must embrace him;
My heart beats to this man as if it knew him.
RENAULT. [*Aside*] I never loved these huggers.
JAFFEIR. Still I see
The cause delights me not. Your friends survey me
As I were dang'rous—but I come armed
Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
A pledge worth more than all the world can pay for.
—My Belvidera! Ho! my Belvidera!
BEDAMAR. What wonder next?
JAFFEIR. Let me entreat you,
As I have henceforth hopes to call ye friends,
That all but the ambassador, this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,

Withdraw awhile to spare a woman's blushes.

Exeunt all but BEDAMAR, RENAULT, JAFFEIR, *and* PIERRE

BEDAMAR. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

JAFFEIR. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA

BELVIDERA. Who?
Who calls so loud at this late, peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentler whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.
—Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

JAFFEIR. Indeed, 'tis late.

BELVIDERA. Oh! I have slept, and dreamt,
And dreamt again. Where hast thou been, thou loiterer?
Tho' my eyes closed, my arms have still been opened,
Stretched every way betwixt my broken slumbers,
To search if thou wert come to crown my rest.
There's no repose without thee. Oh, the day
Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow;
Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good night.

JAFFEIR. O Belvidera! we must change the scene
In which the past delights of life were tasted.
The poor sleep little; we must learn to watch
Our labors late, and early every morning,
Midst winter frosts, thin clad and fed with sparing,
Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.

BELVIDERA. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me!
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs cold!
Heavens, guard my love, and bless his heart with patience.

JAFFEIR. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordained it so that thou and I
(Thou the divinest good man e'er possessed,
And I the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

BELVIDERA. Part! must we part? Oh! am I then forsaken?
Will my love cast me off? have my misfortunes
Offended him so highly that he'll leave me?
Why drag you from me? whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!

JAFFEIR. Oh, friends!

BELVIDERA. Speak to me.

JAFFEIR. Take her from my heart;
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care,
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

RENAULT. Rise, madam! and command amongst your servants!

JAFFEIR. To you, sirs, and your honors, I bequeath her,
And with her this. When I prove unworthy—
(*Gives a dagger*)
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

BELVIDERA. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply,
Or send me to some distant clime your slave;
But let it be far off, lest my complainings
Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.

JAFFEIR. No, Belvidera, I've contrived thy honor;
Trust to my faith, and be but Fortune kind
To me, as I'll preserve that faith unbroken,
When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height
Shall gather all the gazing world about thee,
To wonder what strange virtue placed thee there.
But if we ne'er meet more—

BELVIDERA. Oh, thou unkind one,
Never meet more? Have I deserved this
from you?
Look on me, tell me, tell me—speak, thou
dear deceiver,
Why am I separated from thy love?
If I am false, accuse me; but if true,
Don't, prithee, don't in poverty forsake me!
But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting!
Yet hear me! yet recall me—

Exeunt RENAULT, BEDAMAR, *and* BELVIDERA

JAFFEIR. O my eyes,
Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile
Into my heart, and be weaned altogether!
—My friend, where art thou?

PIERRE. Here, my honor's brother.

JAFFEIR. Is Belvidera gone?

PIERRE. Renault has led her
Back to her own apartment: but, by Heav'n!
Thou must not see her more till our work's
over.

JAFFEIR. No?

PIERRE. Not for your life.

JAFFEIR. O Pierre, wert thou but
she,
How I could pull thee down into my heart,
Gaze on thee till my eye-strings cracked with
love,
Till all my sinews with its fire extended,
Fixed me upon the rack of ardent longing;
Then swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
Come like a panting turtle to thy breast;
On thy soft bosom, hovering, bill and play,
Confess the cause why last I fled away;
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
And never follow false Ambition more.

Exeunt Ambo

ACT III

[SCENE I. AQUILINA'S *house*]

Enter AQUILINA *and her* Maid

AQUILINA. Tell him I am gone to bed. Tell him I am not at home. Tell him I've better company with me, or anything; tell him, in short, I will not see him—the eternal troublesome, vexatious fool. He's worse company than an ignorant physician. I'll not be disturbed at these unseasonable hours.

MAID. But, madam, he's here already, just entered the doors!

AQUILINA. Turn him out again, you unnecessary, useless, giddy-brained ass! If he will not begone, set the house afire and burn us both. I had rather meet a toad in my dish than that old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO. Nacky, Nacky, Nacky—how dost do, Nacky? Hurry durry. I am come, little Nacky; past eleven a-clock, a late hour; time in all conscience to go to bed, Nacky—Nacky, did I say? Aye, Nacky; Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky, queen Nacky—come let's to bed—you fubbs, you pugg you—you little puss—purree tuzzey—I am a senator.

AQUILINA. You are a fool, I am sure.

ANTONIO. May be so, too, sweetheart. Never the worse senator for all that. Come Nacky, Nacky, let's have a game at rump, Nacky.

AQUILINA. You would do well, signior, to be troublesome here no longer, but leave me to myself, be sober, and go home, sir.

ANTONIO. Home, Madonna!

AQUILINA. Aye, home, sir. Who am I?

ANTONIO. Madonna, as I take it you are my—you are—thou art my little Nicky Nacky—that's all!

AQUILINA. I find you are resolved to be troublesome, and so to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loathe you; I am weary of you, sick of you—hang you, you are an old, silly, impertinent, impotent, solicitous coxcomb, crazy in your head, and lazy in your body, love to be meddling with everything, and if you had not money, you are good for nothing.

ANTONIO. "Good for nothing!" Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty-one years old, and good for nothing; that's brave! (*To the* Maid)—Come, come, come,

Mistress Fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a season. Go, turn out I say; it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments—out, out when you are bid to! (*Puts her out and locks the door*)—"Good for nothing," you say.

AQUILINA. Why, what are you good for?

ANTONIO. In the first place, madam, I am old, and consequently very wise—very wise, Madonna, d'e mark that? In the second place take notice, if you please, that I am a senator, and when I think fit can make speeches, Madonna. Hurry durry, I can make a speech in the Senate-house now and then—would make your hair stand on end, Madonna.

AQUILINA. What care I for your speeches in the Senate-house? If you would be silent here, I should thank you.

ANTONIO. Why, I can make speeches to thee, too, my lovely Madonna; for example—my cruel fair one (*Takes out a purse of gold, and at every pause shakes it*), since it is my fate, that you should with your servant angry prove; tho' late at night—I hope 'tis not too late with this to gain reception for my love.—There's for thee, my little Nicky Nacky—take it, here take it—I say take it, or I'll throw it at your head. How now, rebel!

AQUILINA. Truly, my illustrious senator, I must confess your honor is at present most profoundly eloquent, indeed.

ANTONIO. Very well: come now, let's sit down and think upon't a little. Come sit, I say—sit down by me a little, my Nicky Nacky, hah—(*Sits down*) Hurry durry—"good for nothing!"

AQUILINA. No, sir; if you please, I can know my distance and stand.

ANTONIO. Stand! How! Nacky up, and I down? Nay, then, let me exclaim with the poet,

> Show me a case more pitiful who can,
> A standing woman and a falling man.

Hurry durry—not sit down!—See this, ye gods.—You won't sit down?

AQUILINA. No, sir.

ANTONIO. Then look you now; suppose me a bull—a Basan-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus up I get and with my brows thus bent—I broo, I say I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down, will you?—I broo—

(*Bellows like a bull, and drives her about*)

AQUILINA. Well, sir, I must endure this. (*She sits down*) Now your honor has been a bull, pray what beast will your worship please to be next?

ANTONIO. Now I'll be a senator again, and thy lover, little Nicky Nacky! (*He sits by her*) Ah toad, toad, toad, toad! spit in my face a little, Nacky—spit in my face, prithee, spit in my face, never so little. Spit but a little bit—spit, spit, spit, spit, when you are bid, I say; do, prithee, spit—now, now, now, spit. What, you won't spit, will you? then I'll be a dog.

AQUILINA. A dog, my lord?

ANTONIO. Aye, a dog—and I'll give thee this t'other purse to let me be a dog—and to use me like a dog a little. Hurry durry—I will—here 'tis. (*Gives the purse*)

AQUILINA. Well, with all my heart. But let me beseech your dogship to play your tricks over as fast as you can, that you may be turned out of doors as you deserve.

ANTONIO. Aye, aye—no matter for that—that (*He gets under the table*) shan't move me—now, bough waugh waugh, bough waugh— (*Barks like a dog*)

AQUILINA. Hold, hold, hold, sir, I beseech you: what is't you do? If curs bite, they must be kicked, sir.—Do you see, kicked thus?

ANTONIO. Aye, with all my heart. Do kick, kick on; now I am under the table, kick again—kick harder—harder yet, bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough—'odd, I'll have a snap at thy shins—bough waugh wough, waugh, bough!—'Odd, she kicks bravely.—

AQUILINA. Nay, then, I'll go another way to work with you; and I think here's an instrument fit for the purpose. (*Fetches a whip and bell*)—What, bite your mistress, sirrah! out, out of doors, you dog, to kennel

and be hanged—bite your mistress by the legs, you rogue! (*She whips him*)

ANTONIO. Nay, prithee, Nacky, now thou art too loving! Hurry durry, 'odd! I'll be a dog no longer.

AQUILINA. Nay, none of your fawning and grinning, but be gone, or here's the discipline! What, bite your mistress by the legs, you mongrel? Out of doors—hout, hout, to kennel, sirrah! go!

ANTONIO. This is very barbarous usage, Nacky, very barbarous. Look you, I will not go—I will not stir from the door; that I resolve—hurry durry—what, shut me out? (*She whips him out*)

AQUILINA. Aye, and if you come here any more to-night, I'll have my footmen lug you, you cur. What, bite your poor mistress Nacky, sirrah?

Enter MAID

MAID. Heav'ns, madam! what's the matter? (*He howls at the door like a dog*)

AQUILINA. Call my footmen hither presently.

Enter two Footmen

MAID. They are here already, madam; the house is all alarmed with a strange noise that nobody knows what to make of.

AQUILINA. Go, all of you, and turn that troublesome beast in the next room out of my house. If I ever see him within these walls again without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues, I'll have you poisoned all—poisoned, like rats! Every corner of the house shall stink of one of you; go! and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So now for my Pierre:

Thus when godlike lover was displeased,
We sacrifice our fool and he's appeased.

Exeunt

[SCENE II. *The same*]

Enter BELVIDERA

BELVIDERA. I'm sacrificed! I am sold! betrayed to shame!
Inevitable ruin has inclosed me!
No sooner was I to my bed repaired,
To weigh, and (weeping) ponder my condition,
But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care
My peace and honor was entrusted, came
(Like Tarquin) ghastly with infernal lust.
O thou Roman Lucrece! thou couldst find friends to vindicate thy wrong!
I never had but one, and he's proved false;
He that should guard my virtue has betrayed it—
Left me! undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? oh, whither, whither wander?

Enter JAFFEIR

JAFFEIR. Can Belvidera want a resting place
When these poor arms are open to receive her?
Oh, 'tis in vain to struggle with desires
Strong as my love to thee; for every moment
I am from thy sight, the heart within my bosom
Moans like a tender infant, in its cradle,
Whose nurse had left it. Come, and with the songs
Of gentle love persuade it to its peace.

BELVIDERA. I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own me;
'Tis grown a rebel to be ruled no longer,
Scorns the indulgent bosom that first lulled it,
And like a disobedient child disdains
The soft authority of Belvidera.

JAFFEIR. There was a time—

BELVIDERA. Yes, yes, there was a time
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows
Were not despised; when if she chanced to sigh,
Or look but sad—there was indeed a time
When Jaffeir would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eased her declining head upon his breast,

And never left her till he found the cause.
But let her now weep seas,
Cry till she rend the earth; sigh till she burst
Her heart asunder: still he bears it all—
Deaf as the wind, and as the rocks unshaken.
JAFFEIR. Have I been deaf? am I that rock unmoved,
Against whose root tears beat and sighs are sent?
In vain have I beheld thy sorrows calmly!
Witness against me, heav'ns; have I done this?
Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me!
Oh, thou too rashly censur'st of my love!
Couldst thou but think how I have spent this night,
Dark and alone, no pillow to my head,
Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
Thou wouldst not, Belvidera—sure thou wouldst not—
Talk to me thus, but like a pitying angel
Spreading thy wings, come settle on my breast
And hatch warm comfort there ere sorrows freeze it.
BELVIDERA. Why, then, poor mourner, in what baleful corner
Hast thou been talking with that witch, the Night?
On what cold stone hast thou been stretched along,
Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
To mix with theirs the accents of thy woes?
Oh, now I find the cause my love forsakes me!
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In his concernments: my weak, female virtue
Must not be trusted; 'tis too frail and tender.
JAFFEIR. O Portia! Portia! what a soul was thine!
BELVIDERA. That Portia was a woman, and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome (Heav'n guard thy safety!),
Concealed from her the labors of his mind,
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flowed from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles, as his love.
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gav'st last night in parting with me. Strike it
Here to my heart; and as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.
JAFFEIR. Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy—
Unworthy so much virtue. Teach me how
I may deserve such matchless love as thine,
And see with what attention I'll obey thee.
BELVIDERA. Do not despise me: that's the all I ask.
JAFFEIR. Despise thee! hear me—
BELVIDERA. Oh, thy charming tongue
Is but too well acquainted with my weakness;
Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart
Dissolves within my breast, till with closed eyes
I reel into thy arms and all's forgotten.
JAFFEIR. What shall I do?
BELVIDERA. Tell me! be just, and tell me
Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face?
Why am I made a stranger? why that sigh,
And I not know the cause? why, when the world
Is wrapped in rest, why chooses then my love
To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
Loathing his bed and these desiring arms?
Why are these eyes bloodshot with tedious watching?
—Why starts he now and looks as if he wished
His fate were finished? Tell me; ease my fears,
Lest when we next time meet I want the power
To search into the sickness of thy mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.
JAFFEIR. O Belvidera!
BELVIDERA. Why was I last night delivered to a villain?
JAFFEIR. Hah, a villain!

BELVIDERA. Yes! to a villain! Why at such an hour
Meets that assembly all made up of wretches
That look as Hell had drawn 'em into league?
Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I delivered with such dreadful ceremonies?
"To you, sirs, and to your honor I bequeath her,
And with her this: whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart?"
Oh! why's that *rest* concealed from me? Must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?
For such I know I am; that's all my value!
But by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves;
Straight to the Senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me!

JAFFEIR. Is this the Roman virtue? this the blood
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?
Would she have e'er betrayed her Brutus?

BELVIDERA. No,
For Brutus trusted her; wert thou so kind,
What would not Belvidera suffer for thee!

JAFFEIR. I shall undo myself and tell thee all.

BELVIDERA. Look not upon me as I am, a woman,
But as a bone,[1] thy wife, thy friend, who long
Has had admission to thy heart, and there
Studied the virtues of thy gallant nature.
Thy constancy, thy courage, and thy truth,
Have been my daily lesson. I have learnt them,
Am bold as thou, can suffer or despise
The worst of fates for thee, and with thee share them.

JAFFEIR. Oh, you divinest powers! look down and hear
My prayers! instruct me to reward this virtue!
Yet think a little ere thou tempt me further;
Think, I have a tale to tell will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:
Then if thou shouldst, betray me!

BELVIDERA. Shall I swear?

JAFFEIR. No! do not swear. I would not violate
Thy tender nature with so rude a bond;
But as thou hop'st to see me live my days
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast.
I've bound myself by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human—

BELVIDERA. Speak!—

JAFFEIR. To kill thy father—

BELVIDERA. My father!

JAFFEIR. Nay, the throats of the whole Senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He amongst us
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damned. How rich and beauteous will the face
Of Ruin look, when these wide streets run blood;
I and the glorious partners of my fortune
Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead
Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety
Smiling, shall see the wonders of our daring;
And when night comes, with praise and love receive me.

BELVIDERA. Oh!

JAFFEIR. Have a care, and shrink not, even in thought!
For if thou dost—

BELVIDERA. I know it—thou wilt kill me!
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom. Lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! tho' his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing,
Driven me to basest wants, can I behold him
With smiles of vengeance, butchered in his age?

[1] boon.

The sacred fountain of my life destroyed?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?
—Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hired slaves, bravoes, and common stabbers,
Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains? join
With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

JAFFEIR. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've engaged
With men of souls fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind. There's not a heart amongst them
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

BELVIDERA. What's he to whose curs'd hands last night thou gav'st me?
Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story
Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury.

JAFFEIR. Speak on, I charge thee!

BELVIDERA. O my love! if e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place! Last night, last night!

JAFFEIR. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

BELVIDERA. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the pow'r of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approached me, loose, unbuttoned,
Ready for violation. Then my heart
Throbbed with its fears. Oh, how I wept and sighed,
And shrunk and trembled; wished in vain for him
That should protect me. Thou, alas, wert gone!

JAFFEIR. Patience, sweet Heav'n! till I make vengeance sure.

BELVIDERA. He drew the hideous dagger forth thou gav'st him,
And with upbraiding smiles he said, "Behold it;
This is the pledge of a false husband's love."
And in my arms then pressed, and would have clasped me;
But with my cries I scared his coward heart,
Till he withdrew and muttered vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honor,
Thy love—all's staked, and all will go to ruin.

JAFFEIR. No more. I charge thee keep this secret close.
Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire!
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honor;
I'll heal its failings and deserve thy love.

BELVIDERA. Oh, should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

JAFFEIR. Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night, to purchase the creation.

BELVIDERA. When shall we meet again?

JAFFEIR. Anon at twelve!
I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms,
Come like a travelled dove and bring thee peace.

BELVIDERA. Indeed!

JAFFEIR. By all our loves!

BELVIDERA. 'Tis hard to part:
But sure, no falsehood e'er looked so fairly.
—Farewell. Remember twelve!

Exit BELVIDERA

JAFFEIR. Let Heav'n forget me
When I remember not thy truth, thy love.
How cursed is my condition! tossed and jostled
From every corner; Fortune's common fool,
The jest of rogues; an instrumental ass
For villains to lay loads of shame upon,
And drive about just for their ease and scorn!

Enter PIERRE

PIERRE. Jaffeir!

JAFFEIR. Who calls?

PIERRE. A friend that could have wished
T'have found thee otherwise employed. What, hunt
A wife on the dull foil[1]! sure, a stanch husband
Of all hounds is the dullest! Wilt thou never,
Never be weaned from caudles[2] and confections?
What feminine tale hast thou been listening to,
Of unaired shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ache got
By thin-soled shoes? Damnation! that a fellow
Chosen to be sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners
To ease his fulsome lusts and fool his mind.
JAFFEIR. May not a man, then, trifle out an hour
With a kind woman and not wrong his calling?
PIERRE. Not in a cause like ours.
JAFFEIR. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damned condition; for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm called lechery has touched it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Wouldst thou think it, Renault
(That mortified, old, withered, winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest.
I found him out for watering at[3] my wife;
He visited her last night like a kind guardian.
Faith, she has some temptations, that's the truth on't.
PIERRE. He durst not wrong his trust!
JAFFEIR. 'Twas something late, tho',
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.
PIERRE. Was she in bed?
JAFFEIR. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets
White as her bosom, Pierre, dished neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh, how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him!

PIERRE. Patience guide me!
He used no violence?
JAFFEIR. No, no! out on't, violence!
Played with her neck, brushed her with his gray beard,
Struggled and towzled, tickled her till she squeaked a little,
Maybe, or so—but not a jot of violence—
PIERRE. Damn him!
JAFFEIR. Aye, so say I; but hush, no more on't!
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet—tho' no man knows
What fate he's born to. Sure, 'tis near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders.
Will the ambassador be here in person?
PIERRE. No. He has sent commission to that villain, Renault,
To give the executing charge.
I'd have thee be a man if possible
And keep thy temper, for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.
JAFFEIR. Fear not; I am cool as patience.
Had he completed my dishonor, rather
Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue.
PIERRE. He's yonder, coming this way through the hall;
His thoughts seem full.
JAFFEIR. Prithee retire, and leave me
With him alone. I'll put him to some trial,
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.
PIERRE. Be careful then. *Exit* PIERRE
JAFFEIR. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What, be a devil? take a damning oath
For shedding native blood? can there be a sin
In merciful repentance? Oh, this villain!

Enter RENAULT

RENAULT. Perverse and peevish! What a slave is man!
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him!

1 Trail of a hunted animal.
2 A sweet, spiced drink for invalids.
3 desiring.

Dispatch the tool her husband—that were well.
—Who's there?
JAFFEIR. A man.
RENAULT. My friend, my near ally!
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge,
Is very well.
JAFFEIR. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? beats her pulse even?
Neither too hot nor cold?
RENAULT. What means that question?
JAFFEIR. Oh, women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant as their wishes, always wavering,
And ne'er fixed. Was it not boldly done
Even at first sight to trust the thing I loved
(A tempting treasure too!) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine? But thou art honest.
RENAULT. Who dares accuse me?
JAFFEIR. Curs'd be him that doubts
Thy virtue! I have tried it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honor,
I'd put it into thy keeping; for I know thee.
RENAULT. Know me!
JAFFEIR. Aye, know thee. There's no falsehood in thee.
Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.
Now wouldst thou cut my throat or I cut thine?
RENAULT. You dare not do't.
JAFFEIR. You lie, sir.
RENAULT. How!
JAFFEIR. No more.
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, DURAND, BRAINVEIL, *and the rest of the* Conspirators

RENAULT. Spinosa! Theodore!
SPINOSA. The same.
RENAULT. You are welcome!
SPINOSA. You are trembling, sir.
RENAULT. 'Tis a cold night, indeed; I am aged,
Full of decay and natural infirmities.
We shall be warm, my friend, I hope to-morrow.

PIERRE *re-enters*

PIERRE. (*Aside*) 'Twas not well done; thou shouldst have stroked him
And not have galled him.
JAFFEIR. (*Aside*) Damn him, let him chew on't!
Heav'n! where am I? beset with cursèd fiends,
That wait to damn me. What a devil's man
When he forgets his nature!—Hush, my heart.
RENAULT. My friends, 'tis late; are we assembled all?
Where's Theodore?
THEODORE. At hand.
RENAULT. Spinosa?
SPINOSA. Here.
RENAULT. Brainveil?
BRAINVEIL. I am ready.
RENAULT. Durand and Brabe?
DURAND. Command us;
We are both prepared!
RENAULT. Mezzana, Revillido,
Ternon, Retrosi; oh, you are men, I find,
Fit to behold your fate and meet her summons.
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Decked in your honors! Are the soldiers ready?
OMNES. All, all.
RENAULT. You, Durand, with your thousand must possess
St. Marks. You, captain, know your charge already;
'Tis to secure the Ducal Palace. You,
Brabe, with a hundred more must gain the Secque:
With the like number, Brainveil, to the Procuralle.
Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards;
Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.
JAFFEIR. (*Aside*) Oh, reverend cruelty! damned, bloody villain!

RENAULT. During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast.
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets; whilst Revillido,
Mezzana, Ternon and Retrosi, guard you.
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the ars'nal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon (if it dare resist)
Batter't to ruin. But above all I charge you,
Shed blood enough; spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition. If there live a senator
After to-morrow, tho' the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.
JAFFEIR. (*Aside*) Merciless, horrid slave!
—Aye, blood enough!
Shed blood enough, old Renault. How thou charm'st me!
RENAULT. But one thing more, and then farewell till fate
Join us again, or separate us ever.
First, let's embrace; Heav'n knows who next shall thus
Wing ye together. But let's all remember
We wear no common cause upon our swords;
Let each man think that on his single virtue
Depends the good and fame of all the rest—
Eternal honor or perpetual infamy.
Let's remember through what dreadful hazards
Propitious Fortune hitherto has led us;
How often on the brink of some discovery
Have we stood tottering, and yet still kept our ground
So well, the busiest searchers ne'er could follow
Those subtle tracks which puzzled all suspicion.
—You droop, sir!
JAFFEIR. No: with a most profound attention
I've heard[1] it all, and wonder at thy virtue.
RENAULT. Though there be yet few hours 'twixt them and ruin,
Are not the Senate lulled in full security,
Quiet and satisfied, as fools are always!
Never did so profound repose forerun
Calamity so great! Nay, our good fortune
Has blinded the most piercing of mankind,
Strengthened the fearfull'st, charmed the most suspectful,
Confounded the most subtle; for we live!
We live, my friends, and quickly shall our life
Prove fatal to these tyrants. Let's consider
That we destroy oppression, avarice,
A people nursed up equally with vices
And loathsome lusts which Nature most abhors,
And such as without shame she cannot suffer.
JAFFEIR. (*Aside*) O Belvidera, take me to thy arms,
And show me where's my peace; for I've lost it. *Exit* JAFFEIR
RENAULT. Without the least remorse, then, let's resolve
With fire and sword t'exterminate these tyrants;
And when we shall behold those cursed tribunals,
Stained by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,
Burning with flames rather from Heav'n than ours,
The raging, furious and unpitying soldier
Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms
Of gasping wretches; death in every quarter,
With all that sad disorder can produce,
To make a spectacle of horror—then,
Then let's call to mind, my dearest friends,
That there's nothing pure upon the earth;
That the most valued things have most allays[2];
And that in charge of all those vile enormities
Under whose weight this wretched country labors,
The means are only in our hands to crown them.
PIERRE. And may those powers above that are propitious
To gallant minds, record this cause and bless it.

1 Qt *hard.*

2 checks, or alloys.

RENAULT. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found amongst us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain?
ELIOT. Death here without repentance, hell hereafter.
RENAULT. Let that be my lot if as here I stand
Listed by fate amongst her darling sons,
Tho' I had one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature; tho' one hour
Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
One only love, and that but of each other,
Still filled our minds: could I have such a friend
Joined in this cause, and had but ground to fear
Meant foul play, may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you. Who
Would not do less? wouldst not thou, Pierre, the same?
PIERRE. You have singled me, sir, out for this hard question,
As if 'twere started only for my sake!
Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom;
Search it with all your swords! Am I a traitor?
RENAULT. No, but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffeir?
SPINOSA. He left the room just now in strange disorder.
RENAULT. Nay, there is danger in him: I observed him
During the time I took for explanation;
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother.
His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,
All which betrayed a wavering spirit in him,
That labored with reluctancy and sorrow.
What's requisite for safety must be done
With speedy execution; he remains
Yet in our power. I for my own part wear
A dagger.
PIERRE. Well?
RENAULT. And I could wish it—
PIERRE. Where?
RENAULT. Buried in his heart.
PIERRE. Away! w'are yet all friends!
No more of this; 'twill breed ill blood amongst us!
SPINOSA. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house,
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.
PIERRE. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood
That's dear to me?—Is't you?—or you?—or you, sir?
What, not one speak? how you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!
Yet not a word. (*To* RENAULT) Then, sir, I'll tell you a secret;
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue!
RENAULT. A coward—
(*Handles his sword*)
PIERRE. Put, put up thy sword, old man;
Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this breach;
I am too hot. We yet may live friends.
SPINOSA. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.
PIERRE. Again! Who's that?
SPINOSA. 'Twas I.
THEODORE. And I.
REVILLIDO. And I.
ELIOT. And all.
RENAULT. Who are on my side?
SPINOSA. Every honest sword!
Let's die like men and not be sold like slaves.
PIERRE. One such word more, by Heav'n, I'll to the Senate
And hang ye all, like dogs in clusters!

Why peep your coward swords half out their shells?
Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing!
RENAULT. Go to the Senate and betray us! Hasten,
Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.
PIERRE. That's rank falsehood!
Fear'st not thou death? fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffeir's wife proved kind, he had still been true.
Foh—how that stinks!
Thou die! thou kill my friend!—or thou—or thou
—Or thou, with that lean, withered, wretched face!
Away! disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honor calls you!
I'll bring that man whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly.
—Hence, hence, I say!

Exit RENAULT *angrily*

SPINOSA. I fear we have been to blame,
And done too much.
THEODORE. 'Twas too far urged against the man you loved.
REVILLIDO. Here, take our swords and crush 'em with your feet.
SPINOSA. Forgive us, gallant friend.
PIERRE. Nay, now y'have found
The way to melt and cast me as you will.
I'll fetch this friend and give him to your mercy;
Nay, he shall die if you will take him from me.
For your repose I'll quit my heart's jewel,
But would not have him torn away by villains
And spiteful villainy.
SPINOSA. No, may you both
Forever live and fill the world with fame!
PIERRE. Now you are too kind. Whence rose all this discord?
Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we 'scaped!
How near a fall was all we had long been building!
What an eternal blot had stained our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fallen a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butchered by those whose cause he came to cherish!
Oh, could you know him all as I have known him,
How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,
You would not leave this place till you had seen him,
Humbled yourselves before him, kissed his feet,
And gained remission for the worst of follies.
Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves me better recommend,
That I've preserved your fame, and saved my friend.

Exeunt Omnes

ACT IV

[SCENE I. *A street of the city*]

Enter JAFFEIR *and* BELVIDERA

JAFFEIR. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a racked friend. Oh, my dear charming ruin!
Where are we wand'ring?
BELVIDERA. To eternal honor;
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have saved sinking nations. Thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins
Who by thy piety have been preserved
From horrid violation. Every street
Shall be adorned with statues to thy honor,
And at thy feet this great inscription written:
Remember him that propped the fall of Venice.
JAFFEIR. Rather, remember him who after all

The sacred bonds of oaths and holier friendship
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honor,
To sacrifice the bosom that relieved him.
Why wilt thou damn me?
BELVIDERA. O inconstant man!
How will you promise? how will you deceive?
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage;
Tell all thy friends how dangerously[1] thou lov'st me;
And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
Oh, that kind dagger, Jaffeir, how 'twill look
Stuck through my heart, drenched in my blood to th'hilts,
Whilst these poor dying eyes shall with their tears
No more torment thee! Then thou wilt be free.
Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live
Till I am a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil, that old fiend
That's damned himself and would undo mankind.
Last night, my love—
JAFFEIR. Name, name it not again.
It shows a beastly image to my fancy
Will wake me into madness. Oh, the villain!
That durst approach such purity as thine
On terms so vile! Destruction, swift destruction
Fall on my coward head, and make my name
The common scorn of fools if I forgive him!
If I forgive him? If I not revenge
With utmost rage, and most unstaying fury,
Thy sufferings, thou dear darling of my life, love!
BELVIDERA. Delay no longer then, but to the Senate;
And tell the dismal'st story e'er was uttered.
Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepared—how near's the fatal hour!
Save thy poor country; save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed. Save the poor, tender lives
Of all those little infants which the swords
Of murtherers are whetting for this moment.
Think thou already hear'st their dying screams.
Think that thou seest their sad, distracted mothers
Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity
With torn, dishevelled hair and streaming eyes,
Their naked, mangled breasts besmeared with blood,
And even the milk with which their fondled babes
Softly they hushed, dropping in anguish from 'em.
Think thou seest this, and then consult thy heart.
JAFFEIR. Oh!
BELVIDERA. Think too, if thou lose this present minute,
What miseries the next day bring upon thee.
Imagine all the horrors of that night,
Murther and rapine, waste and desolation,
Confusedly ranging. Think what then may prove
My lot! The ravisher may then come safe,
And midst the terror of the public ruin
Do a damned deed—perhaps to lay a train
May catch thy life: then where will be revenge,
The dear revenge that's due to such a wrong?
JAFFEIR. By all Heaven's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee;
For every word thou speak'st strikes through my heart
Like a new light, and shows it how't has wandered.
Just what th'hast made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friends? Ah, take me quickly;
Secure me well before that thought's renewed.
If I relapse once more, all's lost forever.
BELVIDERA. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera?
JAFFEIR. No, th'art my soul itself, wealth, friendship, honor;

[1] arrogantly.

All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summed in thee. Methinks, when in thy arms
Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
Why was such happiness not given me pure?
Why dashed with cruel wrongs, and bitter wantings?
Come, lead me forward now like a tame lamb
To sacrifice; thus in his fatal garlands,
Decked fine and pleased, the wanton skips and plays,
Trots by the enticing, flattering priestess' side,
And much transported with his little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain
Till by her, bound, he's on the altar lain;
Yet then too hardly[1] bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

Enter Officer *and* Guards

OFFICER. Stand! Who goes there?
BELVIDERA. Friends.
JAFFEIR. Friends, Belvidera! Hide me from my friends.
By Heaven, I'd rather see the face of Hell
Than meet the man I love.
OFFICER. But what friends are you?
BELVIDERA. Friends to the Senate and the state of Venice.
OFFICER. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the Council,
Who now are sitting.
JAFFEIR. Sir, you shall be obeyed.
Hold, brutes, stand off! none of your paws upon me!
Now the lot's cast, and Fate, do what thou wilt. *Exeunt guarded*

SCENE [II.] *The Senate-house*

Where appear sitting, the DUKE OF VENICE, PRIULI, ANTONIO, *and eight other* Senators

DUKE. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak; why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of concerns
The state of Venice's honor, or its safety?
PRIULI. Could words express the story I have to tell you,
Fathers, these tears were useless—these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep, tear off these purple robes,
And wrap ourselves in sack-cloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heaven.
Heaven knows if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more!
ALL SENATORS. How!
PRIULI. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's formed a dark conspiracy
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes—nay, the hour, too, fixed;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn even this moment,
And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning. But if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butchered, but do something
That may inform the world in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruined, though we were.
(*A noise without*)
Room, room, make room for some prisoners—
2 SENATOR. Let's raise the city!

Enter Officer *and* Guard

PRIULI. Speak there—what disturbance?
OFFICER. Two prisoners have the guard seized in the streets,
Who say they come to inform this reverend Senate
About the present danger.

Enter JAFFEIR *and* BELVIDERA, *guarded*

ALL. Give 'em entrance—
Well, who are you?
JAFFEIR. A villain.

[1] scarcely.

ANTONIO. Short and pithy.
The man speaks well.
JAFFEIR. Would every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.
DUKE. 'Tis rumored that a plot has been contrived
Against this state; that you have a share in't, too.
If you are a villain, to redeem your honor
Unfold the truth and be restored with mercy.
JAFFEIR. Think not that I to save my life come hither—
I know its value better—but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fixed and sealed. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice;
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.
DUKE. The slave capitulates.
Give him the tortures.
JAFFEIR. That you dare not do;
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of—
Truth which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.
Cowards are scared with threat'nings. Boys are whipped
Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
"Give him the tortures!" Name but such a thing
Again, by Heaven, I'll shut these lips forever.
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels
Shall force a groan away—that you may guess at.
ANTONIO. A bloody minded fellow, I'll warrant;
A damned bloody minded fellow.
DUKE. Name your conditions.
JAFFEIR. For myself, full pardon,
Besides the lives of two and twenty friends
(*Delivers a list*)
Whose names are here enrolled: nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend council,
That in a full assembly of the Senate
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.
ALL. We'll swear.
DUKE. Propose the oath.
JAFFEIR. By all the hopes
Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear!
ALL. We all swear.
JAFFEIR. To grant me what I've asked,
Ye swear.
ALL. We swear.
JAFFEIR. And as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be blest
Or cursed forever.
ALL. Else be cursed forever.
JAFFEIR. (*Delivers another paper*) Then here's the list, and with't the full disclose of all that threatens you.—Now, Fate, thou hast caught me.
ANTONIO. Why, what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats is here! I'll warrant you not one of these fellows but has a face like a lion. I dare not so much as read their names over.
DUKE. Give orders that all diligent search be made
To seize these men; their characters are public.
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a famed Grecian courtesan
Called Aquilina; see that place secured.
ANTONIO. [*Aside*] What! My Nicky Nacky, Hurry Durry,
Nicky Nacky in the plot? I'll make a speech.
—Most noble senators,
What headlong apprehension drives you on,
Right noble, wise, and truly solid senators,
To violate the laws and right of nations?
The lady is a lady of renown.
'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,
And though I say't myself, as many more
Can say as well as I.
2 SENATOR. My lord, long speeches
Are frivolous here when dangers are so near us.
We all well know your interest in that lady;
The world talks loud on't.

ANTONIO. Verily, I have done.
I say no more.
DUKE. But, since he has declared
Himself concerned, pray, captain, take great caution
To treat the fair one as becomes her character,
And let her bed-chamber be searched with decency.
You, Jaffeir, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.
JAFFEIR. [*Aside*] Would the chains of death
Had bound me fast ere I had known this minute!
I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones.
The history of my wickedness shall run
Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
And boys be taught[1] to tell the tale of Jaffeir.
DUKE. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.
JAFFEIR. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee! *Exit guarded*
(*Noise without*)
More traitors; room, room, make room there!
DUKE. How 's this, guards?
Where are our guards? Shut up the gates; the treason 's
Already at our doors.

Enter Officer

OFFICER. My lords, more traitors!
Seized in the very act of consultation;
Furnished with arms and instruments of mischief.
—Bring in the prisoners.

1 Q1 *thought*.

Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, *and other* Conspirators, *in fetters, guarded*

PIERRE. You, my lords and fathers
(As you are pleased to call yourselves) of Venice,
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often labored in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumphs ye bestow
On those that bring you conquests home and honors?
DUKE. Go on; you shall be heard, sir.
ANTONIO. And be hanged too, I hope.
PIERRE. Are these the trophies I've deserved for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers,
When winds and seas conspired to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbors?
When you, great Duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, th'Adriatic, ploughed
Like a lewd whore by bolder prows than yours—
Stepped not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians
The task of honor and the way to greatness?
Raised you from your capitulating fears,
To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace?
And this my recompense! If I am a traitor,
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's base enough
And brave enough to tell me I am a traitor.
DUKE. Know you one Jaffeir?
(*All the* Conspirators *murmur*)
PIERRE. Yes, and know his virtue.
His justice, truth, his general worth and sufferings
From a hard father taught me first to love him.

Enter JAFFEIR, guarded

DUKE. See him brought forth.
PIERRE. [*Aside*] My friend, too, bound? nay, then

Our fate has conquered us, and we must fall.
—Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine
They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants, Jaffeir,
Call us all traitors; art thou one, my brother?
JAFFEIR. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave
That e'er betrayed a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honor to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes which morning was to have crowned,
Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.
PIERRE. So! Then all's over.
Venice has lost her freedom; I, my life.
No more. Farewell!
DUKE. Say, will you make confession
Of your vile deeds and trust the Senate's mercy?
PIERRE. Curs'd be your Senate: curs'd your constitution.
The curse of growing factions and division
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear
Hateful to you as these base chains to me!
DUKE. Pardon, or death?
PIERRE. Death—honorable death!
RENAULT. Death's the best thing we ask or you can give.
ALL CONSPIRATORS. No shameful bonds, but honorable death!
DUKE. Break up the council. Captain, guard your prisoners.
Jaffeir, y'are free, but these must wait for judgment. *Exeunt all the* Senators
PIERRE. Come, where's my dungeon? Lead me to my straw.
It will not be the first time I've lodged hard
To do your Senate service.
JAFFEIR. Hold one moment!
PIERRE. Who's he disputes the judgment of the Senate?
Presumptuous rebel—on—
(*Strikes* JAFFEIR)
JAFFEIR. By Heaven, you stir not.
I must be heard; I must have leave to speak!
Thou hast disgraced me, Pierre, by a vile blow.
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries;
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy.
With pity and with charity behold me;
Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance,
But as there dwells a god-like nature in thee
Listen with mildness to my supplications.
PIERRE. What whining monk art thou? what holy cheat
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears
And cant'st thus vilely? Hence! I know thee not.
Dissemble and be nasty. Leave me, hypocrite!
JAFFEIR. Not know me, Pierre?
PIERRE. No, know thee not. What art thou?
JAFFEIR. Jaffeir, thy friend—thy once loved, valued friend,
Though now deservedly scorned, and used most hardly.
PIERRE. Thou Jaffeir! thou my once loved, valued friend!
By heavens, thou li'st! The man so called, my friend,
Was generous, honest, faithful, just and valiant,
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
Dear to my eyes and tender to my heart:
But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect,
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Prithee, avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful that my nature's chilled at.
JAFFEIR. I have not wronged thee—by these tears I have not!
But still am honest, true, and hope, too, valiant.
My mind still full of thee; therefore, still noble.

Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
Detest me utterly. Oh, look upon me!
Look back and see my sad, sincere submission!
How my heart swells, as even 'twould burst my bosom,
Fond of its goal, and laboring to be at thee!
What shall I do, what say to make thee hear me?
PIERRE. Hast thou not wronged me? dar'st thou call thyself
Jaffeir, that once loved, valued friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wronged me? Whence these chains?
Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
Whence this dishonor but from thee, thou false one?
JAFFEIR. —All's true; yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.
PIERRE. What's that?
JAFFEIR. To take thy life on such conditions
The Council have proposed. Thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.
PIERRE. Life! Ask my life? Confess? Record myself
A villain for the privilege to breathe
And carry up and down this cursèd city
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthensome to itself a few years longer,
To lose, it may be, at last in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art?
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.
JAFFEIR. By all that's just—
PIERRE. Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.
JAFFEIR. Then by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee
Till to thyself, at least, thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentments deal with me.
PIERRE. Not leave me?
JAFFEIR. No, thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head. I'll bear it all with patience
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty,
Lie at thy feet and kiss 'em though they spurn me
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.
PIERRE. Art thou not—
JAFFEIR. What?
PIERRE. A traitor?
JAFFEIR. Yes.
PIERRE. A villain?
JAFFEIR. Granted.
PIERRE. A coward—a most scandalous coward?
Spiritless, void of honor, one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life?
JAFFEIR. All, all, and more—much more. My faults are numberless.
PIERRE. And wouldst thou have me live on terms like thine?
Base as thou art false—
JAFFEIR. No, 'tis to me that's granted;
The safety of thy life was all I aimed at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.
PIERRE. I scorn it more because preserved by thee.
And as, when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Relieved thy wants, and raised thee from thy state
Of wretchedness in which thy fate had plunged thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends,
All I received in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths—and this, this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge thou since hast stol'n:
So I restore it back to thee again,

Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this cursed hour to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewell!—for now I owe thee nothing.
JAFFEIR. Say thou wilt live, then.
PIERRE. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tired with.
JAFFEIR. O Pierre!
PIERRE. No more.
JAFFEIR. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine and ache with gazing.
PIERRE. Leave me!—Nay, then—thus, thus, I throw thee from me,
And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee! [*Rushes off*]
JAFFEIR. Amen.—He's gone—my father, friend, preserver,
And here's the portion he has left me.
(*Holds the dagger up*)
This dagger, well remembrèd—with this dagger
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance,
Parted with this and Belvidera together.
Have a care, Mem'ry; drive that thought no farther.
No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy,
Treasure it up in this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet, they start not from each other.
—So: now for thinking. A blow, call'd traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonorable coward—fogh!
Oh, for a long, sound sleep, and so forget it!
—Down, busy devil—

Enter BELVIDERA

BELVIDERA. Whither shall I fly?
Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation!
Not daring to look up to that dear face
Which used to smile even on my faults, but down
Bending these miserable eyes to earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.
JAFFEIR. Mercy!—Kind Heaven has surely endless stores
Hoarded for thee of blessings yet untasted;
Let wretches loaded hard with guilt as I am,
Bow [with][1] the weight and groan beneath the burthen,
Creep with a remnant of that strength th'have left
Before the footstool of that Heaven th'have injured.
O Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawled on earth! Now if thou hast virtue, help me;
Take me into thy arms, and speak the words of peace
To my divided soul that wars within me,
And raises every sense to my confusion.
By Heav'n, I am tottering on the very brink
Of peace, and thou art all the hold I've left.
BELVIDERA. Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty.
I know th'hast cause to mourn—to mourn, my Jaffeir,
With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailings.
Th'hast lost—
JAFFEIR. Oh, I have lost what can't be counted!
My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoiced in,
Has used me like a slave—shamefully used me.
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.
What shall I do? resentment, indignation,
Love, pity, fear and mem'ry, how I've wronged him!
Distract my quiet with the very thought on't,
And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.

[1] Not in Q1.

BELVIDERA. What has he done?
JAFFEIR. Thou'dst hate me should I tell thee.
BELVIDERA. Why?
JAFFEIR. Oh, he has used me—yet, by Heaven, I bear it!
He has used me, Belvidera—but first swear
That when I've told thee, thou'lt not loathe me utterly,
Though vilest blots and stains appear upon me;
But still at least with charitable goodness,
Be near me in the pangs of my affliction—
Not scorn me, Belvidera, as he has done.
BELVIDERA. Have I then e'er been false that now I am doubted?
Speak! what's the cause I am grown into distrust,
Why thought unfit to hear my love's complainings?
JAFFEIR. Oh!
BELVIDERA. Tell me.
JAFFEIR. Bear my failings, for they are many.
O my dear angel! In that friend I've lost
All my soul's peace; for every thought of him
Strikes my sense hard, and deads it in my brains.
Wouldst thou believe it?
BELVIDERA. Speak.
JAFFEIR. Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his suff'rings,
With eyes o'erflowing and a bleeding heart,
Humbling myself almost beneath my nature,
As at his feet I kneeled and sued for mercy,
Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearness
In which w'have lived so many years together,
With a reproachful hand he dashed a blow;
He struck me, Belvidera—by Heaven, he struck me!
Buffeted, called me traitor, villain, coward!
Am I a coward? am I a villain? Tell me.
Th'art the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so.
Damnation—coward!
BELVIDERA. Oh! forgive him, Jaffeir;
And if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?
JAFFEIR. Hah!
BELVIDERA. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretched in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death,
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted[1] o'er by a vile, butchering villain:
What will thy heart do then? Oh, sure, 'twill stream
Like my eyes now.
JAFFEIR. What means thy dreadful story?
Death, and to-morrow? broken limbs and bowels?
Insulted o'er by a vile, butchering villain?
By all my fears, I shall start out to madness
With barely guessing if the truth's hid longer.
BELVIDERA. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed it.
They say, according to our friend's request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage;
Declare their promised mercy all as forfeited,
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession.
Warrants are passed for public death to-morrow.
JAFFEIR. Death! doomed to die! condemned unheard! unpleaded!
BELVIDERA. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are preparing,
To force confessions from their dying pangs.
Oh, do not look so terribly upon me!
How your lips shake, and all your face disordered!
What means my love?
JAFFEIR. Leave me! I charge thee, leave me. Strong temptations
Wake in my heart.
BELVIDERA. For what?
JAFFEIR. No more, but leave me.
BELVIDERA. Why?
JAFFEIR. Oh! by Heaven, I love thee with that fondness
I would not have thee stay a moment longer

[1] exulted.

Near these cursed hands. Are they not cold upon thee?
(*Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom and puts it back again*)
BELVIDERA. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast is softer ease
Than downy pillows decked with leaves of roses.
JAFFEIR. Alas, thou thinkest not of the thorns 'tis filled with:
Fly ere they call thee. There's a lurking serpent
Ready to leap and sting thee to thy heart.
Art thou not terrified?
BELVIDERA. No.
JAFFEIR. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.
BELVIDERA. Hah!
JAFFEIR. Where's my friend—my friend, thou smiling mischief?
Nay, shrink not; now 'tis too late. Thou shouldst have fled
When thy guilt first had cause, for dire Revenge
Is up and raging for my friend. He groans—
Hark, how he groans! His screams are in my ears
Already; see, th'have fixed him on the wheel,
And now they tear him.—Murther! perjured Senate!
Murther—Oh!—hark thee, trait'ress, thou hast done this;
Thanks to thy tears and false persuading love. (*Fumbling for his dagger*)
How her eyes speak! O thou bewitching creature!
Madness cannot hurt thee. Come, thou little trembler,
Creep, even into my heart, and there lie safe:
'Tis thy own citadel.—Hah—yet stand off!
Heaven must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.
I'll wink and then 'tis done—
BELVIDERA. What means the lord
Of me, my life and love? What's in thy bosom
Thou grasp'st at so?
(*Draws the dagger; offers to stab her*)
Nay, why am I thus treated?
What wilt thou do?—Ah, do not kill me, Jaffeir!
Pity these panting breasts and trembling limbs
That used to clasp thee when thy looks were milder—
That yet hang heavy on my unpurged soul—
And plunge it not into eternal darkness.
JAFFEIR. No, Belvidera, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee as in trust
To be thy portion if I e'er proved false.
On such condition was my truth believed;
But now 'tis forfeited and must be paid for.
(*Offers to stab her again*)
BELVIDERA. (*Kneeling*) Oh, mercy!
JAFFEIR. Nay, no struggling.
BELVIDERA. (*Leaps upon his neck and kisses him*) Now then kill me!
While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
Kiss thy revengeful lips and die in joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.
JAFFEIR. I am—I am a coward. Witness't, Heaven,
Witness it, Earth, and every being, witness!
'Tis but one blow; yet—by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee!
(*He throws away the dagger and embraces her*)
The seal of Providence is sure upon thee,
And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders.
Oh, thou wert either born to save or damn me!
By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By the victorious love that still waits on thee,
Fly to thy cruel father. Save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost forever.
Fall at his feet; cling round his reverend knees;
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him.

Crush him in th'arms, and torture him with thy softness:
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast vanquished me. *Exeunt Ambo*

ACT V

[SCENE I. *A street of the city*]

Enter PRIULI, *solus*

PRIULI. Why, cruel Heaven, have my unhappy days
Been lengthened to this sad one? Oh! dishonor
And deathless infamy is fallen upon me.
—Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
—But then, my only child, my daughter, wedded;
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seized upon my memory,
To make it rot and stink to after ages.
Cursed be the fatal minute when I got her;
Or would that I'd been anything but man,
And raised an issue which would ne'er have wronged me.
The miserablest creatures (man excepted)
Are not the less esteemed though their posterity
Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers;
The vilest beasts are happy in their offsprings,
While only man gets traitors, whores, and villains.
Cursed be the names, and some swift blow from Fate
Lay his head deep, where mine may be forgotten!

Enter BELVIDERA *in a long mourning veil*

BELVIDERA. He's there!—my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child
Exposed to all the outrages of fate
And cruel ruin.—Oh!—
PRIULI. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that com'st thus wrapped in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a grave?
BELVIDERA. A wretch who from the very top of happiness
Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.
PRIULI. Indeed, thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted sorrows.
Would I could help thee.
BELVIDERA. 'Tis greatly in your power.
The world, too, speaks you charitable, and I,
Who ne'er asked alms before, in that dear hope
Am come a-begging to you, sir.
PRIULI. For what?
BELVIDERA. Oh, well regard me! Is this voice a strange one?
Consider, too, when beggars once pretend
A case like mine, no little will content 'em.
PRIULI. What wouldst thou beg for?
BELVIDERA. Pity and forgiveness.
(*Throws up her veil*)
By the kind tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.
PRIULI. My daughter?
BELVIDERA. Yes, your daughter, by a mother
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honor,
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
Dear to your arms. By all the joys she gave you,
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
Look kindly on me; in my face behold
The lineaments of hers y'have kissed so often,
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.
PRIULI. Thou art my daughter!
BELVIDERA. Yes—and y'have oft told me
With smiles of love and chaste, paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.
PRIULI. Oh!
Hadst thou inherited her matchless virtues,
I'd been too bless'd.

BELVIDERA. Nay, do not call to memory
My disobedience, but let pity enter
Into your heart, and quite deface the impression;
For could you think how mine's perplexed, what sadness,
Fears, and despairs distract the peace within me,
Oh, you would take me in your dear, dear arms,
Hover with strong compassion o'er your young one,
To shelter me with a protecting wing
From the black gathered storm that's just, just breaking!
PRIULI. Don't talk thus.
BELVIDERA. Yes, I must; and you must hear too.
I have a husband—
PRIULI. Damn him!
BELVIDERA. Oh, do not curse him!
He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, howe'er[1] he deal with me.
PRIULI. Hah! what means my child?
BELVIDERA. Oh, there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and fate. Yet send me not with curses
Down to my grave; afford me one kind blessing
Before we part! Just take me in your arms
And recommend me with a prayer to Heaven,
That I may die in peace. And when I'm dead—
PRIULI. How my soul's catched!
BELVIDERA. Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear ashes of my tender mother.
She would have pitied me, had Fate yet spared her.
PRIULI. By Heaven, my aching heart forebodes much mischief.
Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.
BELVIDERA. No, I'm contented.
PRIULI. Speak.
BELVIDERA. No matter.
PRIULI. Tell me.
By yon blest heaven, my heart runs o'er with fondness.

[1] Q1 *oh! e'r.*

BELVIDERA. Oh!
PRIULI. Utter't.
BELVIDERA. Oh, my husband, my dear husband
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.
PRIULI. Kill thee?
BELVIDERA. Yes, kill me. When he passed his faith
And covenant against your state and Senate,
He gave me up as hostage for his truth,
With me a dagger and a dire commission,
Whene'er he failed, to plunge it through this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
T'attempt his heart, and bring it back to honor.
Great love prevailed and blessed me with success.
He came, confessed, betrayed his dearest friends
For promised mercy. Now they're doomed to suffer,
Galled with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t'appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood th'atonement.
PRIULI. Heavens!
BELVIDERA. Think you saw what passed at our last parting.
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury. Think you saw his one hand
Fixed on my throat, while the extended other
Grasped a keen, threat'ning dagger. Oh, 'twas thus
We last embraced; when, trembling with revenge,
He dragged me to the ground, and at my bosom
Presented horrid death, cried out, "My friends—
Where are my friends?" swore, wept, raged, threatened, loved—
For he yet loved, and that dear love preserved me
To this last trial of a father's pity.

I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought
That that dear hand should do th'unfriendly office.
If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
Fly to the Senate, save the promised lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

PRIULI. Oh, my heart's comfort!

BELVIDERA. Will you not, my father?
Weep not, but answer me.

PRIULI. By Heaven, I will!
Not one of 'em but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past,
I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life.
Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.
Peace to thy heart! Farewell.

BELVIDERA. Go, and remember,
'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for.

Exeunt severally

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO. Hum, hum, hah, Seignior Priuli, my lord Priuli, my lord, my lord, my lord.—Now, we lords love to call one another by our titles.—My lord, my lord, my lord—Pox on him, I am a lord as well as he, and so let him fiddle.—I'll warrant him he's gone to the Senate-house, and I'll be there too, soon enough for somebody. Odd!—here's a tickling speech about the plot. [*Unrolls a scroll*] I'll prove there's a plot with a vengeance—would I had it without book. Let me see—"Most reverend senators, That there is a plot, surely by this time, no man that hath eyes or understanding in his head will presume to doubt; 'tis as plain as the light in the cowcumber"—no—hold there—cowcumber does not come in yet—"'tis as plain as the light in the sun, or as the man in the moon, even at noonday. It is, indeed, a pumpkin-plot, which, just as it was mellow, we have gathered; and now we have gathered it, prepared, and dressed it, shall we throw it like a pickled cowcumber out at the window? No! That it is not only a bloody, horrid, execrable, damnable, and audacious plot, but it is, as I may so say, a saucy plot; and we all know, most reverend fathers, that what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander: therefore, I say, as those blood-thirsty ganders of the conspiracy would have destroyed us geese of the Senate, let us make haste to destroy them. So I humbly move for hanging"—Hah, hurry durry—I think this will do—tho' I was something out, at first, about the sun and the cowcumber.

Enter AQUILINA

AQUILINA. Good morrow, senator.

ANTONIO. Nacky, my dear Nacky, morrow, Nacky. Odd, I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very jovial—ha-a-a-a-a—kiss me, Nacky. How dost thou do, my little Tory, rory strumpet? Kiss me, I say, hussy, kiss me.

AQUILINA. "Kiss me, Nacky!" Hang you, sir!—coxcomb, hang you, sir!

ANTONIO. Hayty tayty, is it so indeed, with all my heart, faith—(*Sings*) *Hey then, up go we,* faith—*hey then, up go we,* dum dum derum dump.

AQUILINA. Seignior.

ANTONIO. Madonna.

AQUILINA. Do you intend to die in your bed—?

ANTONIO. About threescore years hence. Much may be done, my dear.

AQUILINA. You'll be hanged, seignior.

ANTONIO. Hanged, sweetheart? Prithee, be quiet. Hanged, quoth-a; that's a merry conceit, with all my heart. Why thou jok'st, Nacky; thou art given to joking, I'll swear. Well, I protest, Nacky—nay, I must protest, and will protest that I love joking dearly, man. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kiss thee for joking, and touse thee for joking—and odd, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about that business for joking, too—odd, I have! and (*Sings*) *Hey then, up go we,* dum dum derum dump.

AQUILINA. (*Draws a dagger*) See you this, sir?

ANTONIO. O laud, a dagger! O laud! it is naturally my aversion! I cannot endure the

sight on't; hide it, for Heaven's sake! I cannot look that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh, oh, hide it!

AQUILINA. Yes, in your heart I'll hide it.

ANTONIO. My heart! What, hide a dagger in my heart's blood!

AQUILINA. Yes, in thy heart—thy throat, thou pampered devil!
Thou hast helped to spoil my peace, and I'll have vengeance
On thy cursed life for all the bloody Senate,
The perjured, faithless Senate. Where's my lord,
My happiness, my love, my god, my hero,
Doomed by thy accursed tongue, amongst the rest,
T'a shameful wrack? By all the rage that's in me,
I'll be whole years in murthering thee!

ANTONIO. Why, Nacky,
Wherefore so passionate? What have I done? What's the matter, my dear Nacky? Am not I thy love, thy happiness, thy lord, thy hero, thy senator, and everything in the world, Nacky?

AQUILINA. Thou! Thinkst thou, thou art fit to meet my joys—
To bear the eager clasps of my embraces?
Give me my Pierre, or—

ANTONIO. Why, he's to be hanged, little Nacky—
Trussed up for treason, and so forth, child.

AQUILINA. Thou li'st! stop down thy throat that hellish sentence,
Or 'tis thy last. Swear that my love shall live,
Or thou art dead!

ANTONIO. Ah-h-h-h.

AQUILINA. Swear to recall his doom—
Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.

ANTONIO. I do. [*Aside*] Now, if she would but kick a little bit—one kick now, ah-h-h-h.

AQUILINA. Swear, or—

ANTONIO. I do, by these dear fragrant foots
And little toes, sweet as—e-e-e-e, my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky.

AQUILINA. How!

ANTONIO. Nothing but untie thy shoestring a little, faith and troth;
That's all—that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all.

AQUILINA. Nay, then—

[*Turning the dagger*]

ANTONIO. Hold, hold! thy love, thy lord, thy hero
Shall be preserved and safe.

AQUILINA. Or may this poniard
Rust in thy heart!

ANTONIO. With all my soul.

AQUILINA. Farewell—

Exit AQUILINA

ANTONIO. Adieu. Why, what a bloody-minded, inveterate, termagant strumpet have I been plagued with! Oh-h-h, yet more! nay, then, I die, I die—I am dead already.

(*Stretches himself out*)

[SCENE II. *A street near* PRIULI'S *house*]

Enter JAFFEIR

JAFFEIR. Final destruction seize on all the world!
Bend down, ye heavens, and shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion;
Scorch it with elemental flames to one cursed cinder,
And all us little creepers in't, called men,
Burn, burn to nothing. But let Venice burn
Hotter than all the rest: here kindle hell
Ne'er to extinguish, and let souls hereafter
Groan here, in all those pains which mine feels now.

Enter BELVIDERA

BELVIDERA. (*Meeting him*) My life—

JAFFEIR. (*Turning from her*) My plague—

BELVIDERA. Nay, then I see my ruin,
If I must die!

JAFFEIR. No, Death's this day too busy;
Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labors, tho', and him, too,
But all my poor, betrayed, unhappy friends

Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour;
And yet I live.
BELVIDERA. Then be the next my doom.
I see thou hast passed my sentence in thy heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead against it;
But with the humblest, most obedient patience
Meet thy dear hands, and kiss 'em when they wound me.
Indeed I am willing, but I beg thee do it
With some remorse, and where thou giv'st the blow,
View me with eyes of a relenting love,
And show me pity, for 'twill sweeten justice.
JAFFEIR. Show pity to thee?
BELVIDERA. Yes, and when thy hands,
Charged with my fate, come trembling to the deed,
As thou hast done a thousand, thousand dear times
To this poor breast when kinder rage has brought thee,
When our stinged hearts have leaped to meet each other,
And melting kisses sealed our lips together,
When joys have left me gasping in thy arms;
So let my death come now, and I'll not shrink from't.
JAFFEIR. Nay, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy;
But answer me to what I shall demand
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.
BELVIDERA. I will when I've done weeping—
JAFFEIR. Fie, no more on't!
How long is't since the miserable day
We wedded first—
BELVIDERA. Oh-h-h.
JAFFEIR. Nay, keep in thy tears,
Lest they unman me too.
BELVIDERA. Heaven knows I cannot;
The words you utter sound so very sadly
These streams will follow—
JAFFEIR. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry, then.
BELVIDERA. But was't a miserable day?
JAFFEIR. A curs'd one.
BELVIDERA. I thought it otherwise, and you've oft sworn
In the transporting hours of warmest love—
When sure you spoke the truth—you've sworn you blessed it.
JAFFEIR. 'Twas a rash oath.
BELVIDERA. Then why am I not curs'd too?
JAFFEIR. No, Belvidera; by th'eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.
BELVIDERA. Still so kind?
Still then do you love me?
JAFFEIR. Nature, in her workings,
Inclines not with more ardor to creation
Than I do now towards thee; man ne'er was bless'd
Since the first pair first met, as I have been.
BELVIDERA. Then sure you will not curse me.
JAFFEIR. No, I'll bless thee;
I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think, three years w'have lived together.
BELVIDERA. And may no fatal minute ever part us
Till, reverend grown for age and love, we go
Down to one grave as our last bed, together;
There sleep in peace till an eternal morning.
JAFFEIR. (*Sighing*) When will that be?
BELVIDERA. I hope long ages hence.
JAFFEIR. Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me
Thy very fears) used thee with tender'st love?
Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee?
Did I e'er frown when Belvidera smiled,
Or, by the least unfriendly word, betray
A bating passion? Have I ever wronged thee?
BELVIDERA. No.
JAFFEIR. Has my heart, or have my eyes e'er wand'rèd
To any other woman?
BELVIDERA. Never, never—
I were the worst of false ones, should I accuse thee.
I own I've been too happy, bless'd above
My sex's charter.
JAFFEIR. Did I not say I came to bless thee?

BELVIDERA. Yes.
JAFFEIR. Then hear me, bounteous Heaven!
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing.
With a continual giving hand, let peace,
Honor, and safety always hover round her;
Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning;
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest
Harmless as her own thoughts, and prop her virtue
To bear the loss of one that too much loved,
And comfort her with patience in our parting.
BELVIDERA. How—parting, parting!
JAFFEIR. Yes, forever parting.
I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon heaven,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour forever.
BELVIDERA. Oh, call back
Your cruel blessings; stay with me and curse me!
JAFFEIR. No, 'tis resolved.
BELVIDERA. Then hear me, too, just Heaven!
Pour down your curses on this wretched head
With never-ceasing vengeance; let despair,
Danger, or infamy—nay all, surround me;
Starve me with wantings; let my eyes ne'er see
A sight of comfort, nor my heart know peace;
But dash my days with sorrow, nights with horrors
Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury
To make me mad enough for what I lose,
If I must lose him.—If I must!—I will not.
Oh, turn and hear me!
JAFFEIR. [*Aside*] Now hold, heart, or never!
BELVIDERA. By all the tender days we have lived together,
By all our charming nights, and joys that crowned 'em,
Pity my sad condition—speak, but speak!
JAFFEIR. Oh-h-h!
BELVIDERA. By these arms that now cling round thy neck,
By this dear kiss and by ten thousand more,
By these poor streaming eyes—
JAFFEIR. Murther! unhold me.
By th'immortal destiny that doomed me
(*Draws his dagger*)
To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer.
Resolve to let me go or see me fall—
BELVIDERA. Hold, sir; be patient.
(*Passing-bell tolls*)
JAFFEIR. —Hark, the dismal bell
Tolls out for death; I must attend its call, too,
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects me.
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewell forever.
(*Going out, looks back at her*)
BELVIDERA. Leave thy dagger with me;
Bequeath me something.—Not one kiss at parting?
O my poor heart, when wilt thou break?
JAFFEIR. Yet stay!
We have a child, as yet a tender infant.
Be a kind mother to him when I am gone;
Breed him in virtue and the paths of honor,
But let him never know his father's story.
I charge thee guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune or his name.
Now—nearer yet—
(*Approaching each other*)
Oh, that my arms were riveted
Thus round thee ever!—But my friends, my oath! (*Kisses her*)
This and no more.
BELVIDERA. Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en care of;
I'll give't him truly.
JAFFEIR. [*Kissing her*] So!—now farewell.
BELVIDERA. Forever?
JAFFEIR. Heaven knows, forever; all good angels guard thee. [*Exit*]
BELVIDERA. All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment.
Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights,

Which I must now mourn out in widowed tears.
Blasted be every herb and fruit and tree;
Curs'd be the rain that falls upon the earth,
And may the general curse reach man and beast.
Oh, give me daggers, fire, or water!
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,
Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh, there's all quiet; here, all rage and fury!
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain.
I long for thick, substantial sleep. Hell, Hell,
Burst from the center; rage and roar aloud
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am.

Enter PRIULI *and* Servants

Who's there?
PRIULI. Run, seize and bring her safely home. (*They seize her*)
Guard her as you would life. Alas, poor creature!
BELVIDERA. What? To my husband then conduct me quickly.
Are all things ready? Shall we die most gloriously?
Say not a word of this to my old father.
Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing flowers,
Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber. *Exeunt*

SCENE [III] *opening, discovers a scaffold and a wheel prepared for the executing of* PIERRE; *then enter* Officers, PIERRE, *and* Guards, *a* Friar, Executioner, *and a great* Rabble

OFFICER. Room, room there! Stand all by; make room for the prisoner.
PIERRE. My friend not come yet?
FATHER. Why are you so obstinate?
PIERRE. Why you so troublesome, that a poor wretch
Cannot die in peace,
But you, like ravens, will be croaking round him?
FATHER. Yet Heaven—
PIERRE. I tell thee, Heaven and I are friends.
I ne'er broke peace with't yet, by cruel murthers,
Rapine, or perjury, or vile deceiving;
But lived in moral justice towards all men,
Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,
Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confine me.
FATHER. But an all-seeing Judge—
PIERRE. You say my conscience
Must be mine accuser. I have searched that conscience,
And find no records there of crimes that scare me.
FATHER. 'Tis strange you should want faith.
PIERRE. You want to lead
My reason blindfold, like a hampered lion,
Checked of its nobler vigor then, when baited,
Down to obedient tameness; make it couch,
And show strange tricks which you call "signs of faith."
So silly souls are gulled and you get money.
Away, no more!—Captain, I would hereafter
This fellow write no lies of my conversion
Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.

Enter JAFFEIR

JAFFEIR. Hold. Eyes, be dry; heart, strengthen me to bear
This hideous sight, and humble me. Take
The last forgiveness of a dying friend,
Betrayed by my vile falsehood to his ruin!
—O Pierre!
PIERRE. Yet nearer.
JAFFEIR. Crawling on my knees,
And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee.
How shall I look up to thy injured face,
That always used to smile with friendship on me?
It darts an air of so much manly virtue,
That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
And stripes are fitter for me than embraces.
PIERRE. Dear to my arms, though thou hast undone my fame,

I cannot forget to love thee. Prithee, Jaffeir,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I am now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.
JAFFEIR. Good! I am the vilest creature, worse than e'er
Suffered the shameful fate thou art going to taste of.
Why was I sent for to be used thus kindly?
Call, call me villain, as I am; describe
The foul complexion of my hateful deeds.
Lead me to the rack, and stretch me in thy stead;
I've crimes enough to give it its full load,
And do it credit. Thou wilt but spoil the use on't,
And honest men hereafter bear its figure
About 'em, as a charm from treacherous friendship.
OFFICER. The time grows short. Your friends are dead already.
JAFFEIR. Dead!
PIERRE. Yes, dead, Jaffeir; they've all died like men, too,
Worthy their character.
JAFFEIR. And what must I do?
PIERRE. O Jaffeir!
JAFFEIR. Speak aloud thy burthened soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortured friend.
PIERRE. Friend! Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heav'n knows I want a friend.
JAFFEIR. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he is to die, my thoughts are idle.
PIERRE. No! Live, I charge thee, Jaffeir.
JAFFEIR. Yes, I will live,
But it shall be to see thy fall revenged
At such a rate as Venice long shall groan for.
PIERRE. Wilt thou?
JAFFEIR. I will, by Heav'n!
PIERRE. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh—yet—shall I trust thee?
JAFFEIR. No: I've been false already.
PIERRE. Dost thou love me?
JAFFEIR. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.
PIERRE. (*He weeps*) Curse on this weakness!
JAFFEIR. Tears! Amazement! Tears!
I never saw thee melted thus before.
And know there's something lab'ring in thy bosom
That must have vent; though I'm a villain, tell me.
PIERRE. (*Pointing to the wheel*) Seest thou that engine?
JAFFEIR. Why?
PIERRE. Is't fit a soldier who has lived with honor,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crowned with conquest,
Be exposed a common carcass on a wheel?
JAFFEIR. Hah!
PIERRE. Speak! is't fitting?
JAFFEIR. Fitting?
PIERRE. Yes, is't fitting?
JAFFEIR. What's to be done?
PIERRE. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it.
OFFICER. The day grows late, sir.
PIERRE. I'll make haste. O Jaffeir,
Though thou'st betrayed me, do me some way justice.
JAFFEIR. No more of that. Thy wishes shall be satisfied.
I have a wife, and she shall bleed; my child too
Yield up his little throat, and all t'appease thee— (*Going away* PIERRE *holds him*)
PIERRE. No, this—
(*He whispers* JAFFEIR) no more!
JAFFEIR. Hah! is't then so?
PIERRE. Most certainly.
JAFFEIR. I'll do't.
PIERRE. Remember!

OFFICER. [*Approaching*] Sir.
PIERRE. Come, now I'm ready.
(*He and* JAFFEIR *ascend the scaffold*)
—Captain, you should be a gentleman of honor;
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
Come!
(*Takes off his gown.* Executioner *prepares to bind him*)
FATHER. Son!
PIERRE. Hence, tempter!
OFFICER. Stand off, priest!
PIERRE. I thank you, sir.
(*To* JAFFEIR)
You'll think on't?
JAFFEIR. 'Twon't grow stale before tomorrow.
PIERRE. Now, Jaffeir! now I am going. Now—
(Executioner *having bound him*)
JAFFEIR. Have at thee,
Thou honest heart. Then—here—
(*Stabs him*)
—And this is well, too.
(*Then stabs himself*)
FATHER. Damnable deed!
PIERRE. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly.—We have deceived the Senate.
JAFFEIR. Bravely.
PIERRE. Ha, ha, ha—Oh, oh— (*Dies*)
JAFFEIR. Now, ye curs'd rulers,
Thus of the blood y'have shed I make libation,
And sprinkl't mingling. May it rest upon you,
And all your race. Be henceforth Peace a stranger
Within your walls; let plagues and famine waste
Your generations.—Oh, poor Belvidera!
Sir, I have a wife; bear this in safety to her—
A token that with my dying breath I blest her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I am sick—I'm quiet— (JAFFEIR *dies*)

OFFICER. Bear this news to the Senate,
And guard their bodies till there's farther order.
Heav'n grant I die so well—
(*Scene shuts upon them*)

[SCENE IV. *A room in Priuli's house*]

Soft music. Enter BELVIDERA *distracted, led by two of her* Women, PRIULI, *and* Servants

PRIULI. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heav'n.
BELVIDERA. Come, come, come, come, come! Nay, come to bed!
Prithee, my love. The winds!—hark, how they whistle!
And the rain beats: oh, how the weather shrinks me!
—You are angry now; who cares? pish, no indeed.
Choose then. I say you shall not go; you shall not!
Whip your ill nature; get you gone then!—
(JAFFEIR'S Ghost *rises*)
Oh,
Are you returned? See, father, here he's come again!
Am I to blame to love him? Oh, thou dear one,
(Ghost *sinks*)
Why do you fly me? Are you angry still, then?
Jaffeir! where art thou?—Father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me! He's here somewhere.
Stand off, I say!—What, gone? Remember't, tyrant!
I may revenge myself for this trick one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't. Renault's a nasty fellow.
Hang him, hang him, hang him!

Enter Officer *and others.* Officer *whispers* PRIULI

PRIULI. News—what news?
OFFICER. Most sad, sir.
Jaffeir, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabbed Pierre, and next himself.

Both fell together.

PRIULI. —Daughter—
(*The* Ghosts of JAFFEIR *and* PIERRE *rise together, both bloody*)

BELVIDERA. Hah, look there!
My husband bloody, and his friend, too!
—Murther!
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision;
On these poor trembling knees I beg it.
(Ghosts *sink*)
Vanished—
Here they went down. Oh, I'll dig, dig the den up.
You shan't delude me thus.—Hoa, Jaffeir, Jaffeir!
Peep up and give me but a look.—I have him!
I've got him, father: oh, now how I'll smuggle[1] him!
My love! my dear! my blessing! help me, help me!
They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom!
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell—
(*She dies*)

MAID. She's dead—
Breathless and dead.

PRIULI. Then guard me from the sight on't.
Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning,
Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun
May never enter. Hang it round with black;
Set up one taper that may last a day—
As long as I've to live; and there all leave me,
Sparing no tears when you this tale relate,
But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.

Exeunt Omnes

CURTAIN

EPILOGUE

The text is done, and now for application;
And when that's ended, pass your approbation.
Though the conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there;
And there's a certain faction fain would sway,
If they had strength enough, and damn this play.
But this the author bade me boldly say:
If any take his plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart;
Poets in honor of the truth should write
With the same spirit brave men for it fight;
And though against him causeless hatreds rise,
And daily where he goes of late he spies
The scowls of sullen and revengeful eyes,
'Tis what he knows with much contempt to bear,
And serves a cause too good to let him fear.
He fears no poison from an incensed drab,
No ruffian's five-foot-sword, nor rascal's stab,
Nor any other snares of mischief laid,
Not a Rose-alley cudgel-ambuscade,
From any private cause where malice reigns,
Or general pique all blockheads have to brains:
Nothing shall daunt his pen when truth does call,
No, not the picture-mangler[1] at Guildhall.
The rebel-tribe, of which that vermin's one,
Have now set forward and their course begun;
And while that prince's figure they deface,
As they before had massacred his name,
Durst their base fears but look him in the face,
They'd use his person as they've used his fame;
A face, in which such lineaments they read
Of that great martyr's[2] whose rich blood they shed,
That their rebellious hate they still retain,
And in his son would murther him again.
With indignation then, let each brave heart,
Rouse and unite to take his injured part;
Till Royal love and goodness call him home,
And songs of triumph meet him as he come;
Till Heaven his honor and our peace restore,
And villains never wrong his virtue more.

[1] fondle.

[1] Q1, note in margin: "The rascal that cut the Duke of York's picture." [2] Charles I.

BURY FAIR

A Comedy by Thomas Shadwell

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Lord Bellamy [living in the country: friend to Wildish]

Mr. Wildish [a London gentleman]

Mr. Oldwit
Sir Humphrey Noddy } Bury fops
Mr. Trim

La Roch [a French barber and peruke-maker]

Valet to Mr. Wildish

Charles

Butler

Nicholas, servant to La Roch

Page to La Roch

Lady Fantast, wife to Mr. Oldwit

Mrs. Fantast, daughter to my Lady Fantast by a former husband

Mrs. Gertrude, Oldwit's daughter by a former wife

[Philadelphia, her half-sister, disguised as Charles, Page to Lord Bellamy]

Luce, Mrs. Fantast's woman

Four Ladies

Milliner, Perfumer, Hosier, Goldsmith, Indian-Gown Man, two Jack-Puddings, Gingerbread Woman, Fruit Women, Country Fellows and Wenches, Constable and his Guard, Servants and Footmen

Scene: *St. Edmund's Bury*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY

To

Charles

Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household, Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, and one of the most Honorable Privy Council

My Lord,

I who have been so long and so continually obliged by your Lordship, have ever fresh occasions of acknowledging your favor and bounty to me, and cannot be silent of the late great honor you have done me in making me the King's servant; but must publish my gratitude for that and all the rest of the great obligations I have received. Your Lordship not only makes use of your own power, but of that which the King has entrusted you with, to do good to mankind, which you ever delighted in. And as I am apt to believe that no man had ever a great office conferred upon him with more favor from his Prince, so I am well assured no man ever received one with a more general liking of the people than your Lordship. Nothing but the service of so great and gracious a King, who so miraculously redeemed us, and since makes all our interests his own, could recompense you for the happy retirement you might enjoy, and wherein you so much delight.

This play, my Lord, I humbly submit to your Lordship's judgment. I can write nothing worthy of your acceptance; but I hope your Lordship will give some indulgence to this, since it was written during eight months' painful sickness, wherein all the several days in which I was able to write any part of a scene amounted not to one month, except some few which were employed in indispensable business. This is indeed

no excuse in anyone who does not write for necessities of life.

The play has met with a kind reception from all for aught I hear, but some of the late loyal poets, above whose censure I esteem myself; and from some who are still so fond of the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance that they think it a profanation to bring the very words into a comedy.

These are so weak to mistake that for a point of divinity which is indeed a point of law; and some of the most vigorous maintainers of that doctrine have seen their error and not only left off professing it, but have wisely and justly contradicted it in their practice by assisting towards our late wonderful deliverance. And sure there is no need of any great measure of understanding to find out that when the compact on which government is founded is broken, and those very laws destroyed which were made to secure the people in their estates, liberty, and religion, the law of nature must take place which not only permits but obliges mankind to self-defence.

I never could recant in the worst of times, when my ruin was designed and my life was sought, and for near ten years I was kept from the exercise of that profession which had afforded me a competent subsistence; and surely I shall not now do it, when there is a liberty of speaking common sense, which, tho' not long since forbidden, is now grown current.

I humbly beg your Lordship's pardon for the trouble of this epistle, who am,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's
Most obliged humble servant,
Tho. Shadwell

PROLOGUE

To what hard laws you comic writers bind!
Who must at every turn new humor find;
Though the great masters of the former age
Had all the choice of humor for the stage:
And they that plenteous harvest reaped so clean,
Their successors can little else but glean.
Frolic and Cockwood[1] yet were good and new;
And the Plain-dealer, and Sir Fopling you
Have seen, and justly have applauded too.
Our author some new humor did produce,
But look not for an unexhausted cruse.
The task each day grows harder than before;
For as good poets have brought forth great store,
So fellows of no genius, with much toil,
Still sweat for humor, which they always spoil:
And by their hints good comic pens prevent,
As whelps stanch hounds, by foiling of the scent,
These wretched poëtitos,[2] who got praise
For writing most confounded loyal plays,
With viler, coarser jests than at Bear-Garden,
And silly Grubstreet songs worse than Tom-Farthing.
If any noble patriot did excel,
His own and country's rights defending well,
These yelping curs were straight looed[3] on to bark,
On the deserving man to set a mark.
These abject, fawning parasites and knaves,
Since they were such, would have all others slaves.
'Twas precious loyalty that was thought fit
T'atone for want of honesty and wit.
No wonder common-sense was all cried down,
And noise and nonsense swaggered through the town.
Our author then oppressed, would have you know it,
Was silenced for a Nonconformist poet;
In those hard times he bore the utmost test,
And now he swears he's loyal as the best.
Now, sirs, since common-sense has won the day,
Be kind to this, as to his last year's play.
His friends stood firmly to him when distressed;
He hopes the number is not now decreased.
He found esteem from those he valued most:
Proud of his friends, he of his foes could boast,
To all you Bury sparks he bid me say,
That every part is fiction in his play;
Particular reflections there are none:
Our poet knows not one in all your town.
If any has so very little wit
To think a fop's dress can his person fit,
E'en let him take it, and make much of it.

1 Characters in Etherege's plays.

2 poetasters. 3 hallooed.

ACT I

SCENE I. [WILDISH'S *lodging*]

WILDISH *and his* Valet *dressing him*

VALET. Now, I hope, sir, you will acknowledge you see a sweet town, clean and finely situated in a delicate air; here I was born, here I sucked my first breath.

WILDISH. Thus every coxcomb is big with the praise of the country and place of his nativity.

VALET. All the world says as much of St. Edmund's Bury.

WILDISH. There is indeed some truth in this; but 'tis not thou, but the town, is in the right: for thou wouldst have recommended the air of the worst town in the hundreds[1] of Essex, hadst thou sucked thy first breath in it, as thou sayest. But one thing I can tell of thy town—that it can produce a blockhead.

VALET. You may say what you please of me, sir, but there are so many fine gentlemen and ladies, so gallant and so well bred, we call it little London; and it outdoes St. James's Square, and all the squares, in dressing and breeding—nay, even the Court itself, under the rose.

WILDISH. I doubt not but they are given to outdo, as all imitators are.

VALET. Well, you London wits will never give any man, nor anything, a good word.

WILDISH. You impudent rascal! Wit, say you! What, do you call me names? I had as lief be called a pickpocket as a wit. A wit is always a merry, idle, waggish fellow, of no understanding: parts indeed he has, but he had better be without 'em. Your solid fop is a better man; he'll be diligent and fawning, always in the way, and with his blockhead do his business at last. But your wit will either neglect all opportunities for pleasure, or, if he brings his business into a hopeful way, he will laugh at or draw his wit upon some great man or other and spoil all.

VALET. Would I were a wit, for all that. But to give you an example of the wit and breeding of our town, there is the Lady Fantast and her daughter.

WILDISH. The most perpetual, impertinent, prattling, conceited, affected jades that ever plagued mankind.

VALET. Mercy on me!—Impertinent? Why, they're the flower of Bury. Is not the young lady a beauty too?

WILDISH. I must confess God has given her one good face, but by her most insupportable affectation she screws it into twenty bad ones. She has naturally a good complexion, becoming good features; and she, by art, makes her face look like a new white wall with a red lettice.[2]

VALET. I hope you'll grant Mr. Oldwit is a fine, facetious, witty old gentleman—my Lady Fantast's husband?

WILDISH. Almost as arrant an ass as thou art. He is a paltry, old-fashioned wit and punner of the last age, that pretends to have been one of Ben Jonson's sons, and to have seen plays at the Blackfriars.

VALET. You'll be stoned in the streets, sir, if you talk thus in Bury. I warrant you will not allow Sir Humphrey Noddy to be a wit and a fine gentleman.

WILDISH. A blunt, noisy, laughing, roaring, drinking fellow, as troublesome as a monkey, and as witless as a jackdaw; he is, at best, but a wag.

VALET. Well, sir, say what you please, he is a fine gentleman, and will make a man burst a vein to keep him company. He has wit at will, that's certain.

WILDISH. If the rogue had no more money at will he'd die in a ditch.

VALET. Will nobody at Bury please you? What think you of Mr. Trim? He's accounted the finest gentleman in all Bury for breeding and civility and the like.

WILDISH. Now you have hit on't: he is a most complete and finished fop. Nature has not been negligent, nor art been idle, in his composition. He is very wise, reserved, full of forms, and empty of substance; all

1 Here, lowlands.

2 lattice.

ceremony and no sense; more troublesomely ill-bred with his formality than a high-shoed peasant with his roughness. Sir Noddy and he are two excellent fops in consort.

VALET. Fops! Mercy upon me! You will be accounted a madman if you talk thus at Bury.

WILDISH. Yes, among fools.

VALET. Why, they are those that carry all the town before 'em.

WILDISH. No doubt on't; I never knew a town yet wherein the fops do not carry all before 'em. They are a numerous, impudent, and noisy party, while the wise and ingenious are few, modest, and reserved. There are men of wit, honor, and breeding; and women of great wit, beauty, and ingenuity, and well-bred too, in this town, which is really a sweet town: but these pretend to nothing. Your pretenders never have anything in 'em.

Enter MR. TRIM

VALET. Hold, sir! here is Mr. Trim.

TRIM. Sweet Mr. Wildish! I am your most humble servant, and cannot but congratulate those auspicious stars that brought you hither to render this town and your friends in it happy by your presence.

(TRIM *stands jetting out his bum, and bowing all the while*)

WILDISH. You do me honor, sir.

TRIM. Coming abroad to participate of the freshness of the morning among our Bury gallants, the thrice fortunate rencounter with one of your train put me in mind of paying that tribute of my service which I long have wished to pay. But my wishes have often been frustrated for want of that happy opportunity of kissing your hands which I now enjoy.

WILDISH. Your great civilities are surprising; really your generosity is as much beyond my expectation as it is above my merit. (*Aside*) What an engine[1] is this fop!

TRIM. It is impossible that we of Bury, who, I may say with modesty enough, have no small fame for breeding and civility, can ever be so obnoxious to that stupidity, or neglect of either, as not to value the great honor done to us, and the cohonestation of us, by your arrival at Bury at this time of the Fair, which will add to the wonted gaiety and splendor of the place and season.

WILDISH. You astonish me with your most admirable address and complaisance; and I think there lives not, among the race of mankind, a person more skilful in all decencies of behavior, completeness of expression, gestures of body, modulations of voice, and all those arts of modish gallantry which might render a man the mirror of courts, and the wonder and example of all other places. (*Aside*) A pox on this fool in a frame!

VALET. [*Aside*] Rarely done on both sides! Oh, how their tongues are hung!

WILDISH. Be pleased to sit.

TRIM. O lord, sir!—while you are on your feet? Sure I can never live to be blotted with that odious solecism in manners. Nay, sir, I beseech you.

(*They sit down, but* TRIM *strives to sit down last*)

WILDISH. Sir, you will catch cold.

(WILDISH *makes signs to put his hat on, and takes his own up.* TRIM *strives again who shall put on his hat last*)

TRIM. I had rather catch anything than the infamy of ill-breeding.

WILDISH. Well, sir, how stand affairs at Bury?

TRIM. Singularly well, sir; the amenity of our situation, together with the equal temperature of the climate, produces in us that serenity of mind, that Bury seems to be the habitation of the Graces and the Muses.

WILDISH. Bury indeed seems to be the scene of beauty, wit, and breeding.

TRIM. 'Tis a great honor to us, to hear this pronounced by a person who is no less eminent in wit than celebrated for humanity and decency of deportment.

[1] bore.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] A pox on this puppy! Two more such would drive me out of Bury before I see my mistress, the creature of the world I am most passionately in love with!

TRIM. You, that make so noble a figure among the nimble and quick spirits of the age, and are such a top wit that all England rings out your fame!

WILDISH. Prithee, Mr. Trim, whate'er you do, don't call me a wit; 'tis good for nothing in this age but to undo a man. I shall be hunted for a wild beast. But pray, what lady rides Admiral[1] here at Bury?

TRIM. O Lord! who should but Madam Fantast, the sweet Lady Fantast's daughter? a paragon of beauty and a mirror of wit and breeding! at once the envy and wonder of the sex and age! She bears the flag of wit and breeding on the main topsail of her beauty. [*Aside*] A pretty trope!

WILDISH. How does Mr. Oldwit's young daughter? I saw her in London last Easter-term. She is the prettiest, charming creature my eyes ever beheld!

TRIM. She is indeed a pretty bud of beauty, and if she blossoms under the sunshine of my Lady Fantast's favor and her daughter's example, she will flourish; otherwise not.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] Very concise and dogmatical. (*To him*) You are a great servant of Mrs. Fantast's.

TRIM. Aye! I am her humble admirer, her adorer. I call her Dorinda, and she honors me with the name of Eugenius. I visit her daily.

WILDISH. Nicknames and visits! Then there's somewhat more between you, i'faith, Mr. Trim.

TRIM. Upon my honor, nothing but a certain creeping correspondence, a conversation that savors somewhat of gallantry, mixed now and then with ombre, crimp, comet, or incertain;[2] and sometimes we read an author or so.

WILDISH. Or so! Hark in your ear. [*Whispers*]

TRIM. Sir, I am astonished to think I should be obnoxious to that infelicity to be so mistaken, and I must tell you, sir, I scorn your words.

WILDISH. I did not think it had been a dishonor to a man to lie with a pretty woman.

TRIM. I would not for the whole world, nor ever did—mistake me not—unless I were married.

WILDISH. What a devil do we all run after 'em and keep 'em company for, and dance, and play the fool, but *in ordine ad*?

TRIM. I visit all the ladies for their conversation—for the excellence of their conversation.

WILDISH. Conversation! That is so frivolous it were not to be borne but for something else that shall be nameless. And I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Trim, that any woman you keep company with who does not think you have a mind to lie with her, will never forgive you, to my knowledge.

TRIM. Their conversation does infinitely transcend men's, I assure you: I have studied the sex.

WILDISH. I'll tell you one thing more; that you must never be alone with a woman but you must offer, or she knows you care not for her. Five to one but she grants; but if she does not care for you, but denies, she's certain by that you care for her, and will esteem you the better ever after.

TRIM. Oh, uncharitable sentence!

WILDISH. Come, you and I'll sup together and be merry, and two or three bottles will make you freer and more open-hearted.

TRIM. I never sup. We of the better rank never sup at Bury.

WILDISH. How?—Not sup?

TRIM. No.

Enter MR. OLDWIT, *and* SIR HUMPHREY NODDY *stealing in*

WILDISH. —Nor drink a bottle?

TRIM. Never between meals. We do indeed divert ourselves with some milk-pottage in the evening; that's all.

[1] is social leader. [2] All old card games.

SIR HUMPHREY. [*Aside*] Now, now this rogue's my rival! I shall tease him ere I have done with him.

(*He plucks the chair from under* TRIM *and gives him a devilish fall.* OLDWIT *and he laugh immoderately*)

OLDWIT. Sir Humphrey, forbear; I pray, forbear! You'll be the death of me.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] How now? What, will not this fool cut the other fool over the pate? Shall I have no sport with 'em?

OLDWIT. I shall break a vein if I keep you company, you arch wag, you! Mr. Wildish, I am come to kiss your hands: you are welcome to Bury Fair.

WILDISH. Sir, I am your most humble servant. You honor me with this visit.

SIR HUMPHREY. Dear Ned, let me kiss thee! Ah, Ned, that night I saw thee at Newmarket!

WILDISH. (*Aside*) Which was the first night I ever saw the puppy.

SIR HUMPHREY. I shall never forget it. Ah, 'twas the merriest night!

WILDISH. Aye, 'twas so: we talked of nothing but cocks, dogs, and horses.

SIR HUMPHREY. Not a word!—'Twas the bravest night! But I was too hard for and out-vapored all the jockeys and cockers; and after that I hunted over a bottle—"Here Jowler! hey Venus!"—and we roared so till four in the morning that, Gad take me, between you and me, I was deaf on both ears for three weeks after; I have scarce recovered one ear yet. I would give fifty pound for such another night.

TRIM. Sir, I must tell you your deportment is very indecent, and savors much of ill-breeding. And I would desire you would please to explain yourself in this particular.

SIR HUMPHREY. Puh! Waggery—mere waggery. Dear Jack, kiss me: honest Jack, I love to be familiar with my friends. Jack, Jack, dear Jack! nowns[1] Jack!

TRIM. Jack, Jack, Jack! Familiar! I must tell you, sir, I cannot brook the roughness of your demeanor, the consequences whereof may produce those effects as may not be agreeable to those decencies required in conversation. But I shall at present take my leave and visit ladies. Sir, I kiss your hands.

WILDISH. Sir, your most humble servant.

TRIM. Mr. Oldwit, I am your most faithful servant. [*Exit* TRIM]

OLDWIT. Your servant, sweet Mr. Trim.—Well, Sir Humphrey Noddy, go thy ways; thou art the archest wit and wag! I must forswear thy company; thou'lt kill me else.

SIR HUMPHREY. Hang't! a pox on't! what is this world worth without wit and waggery and mirth? I love to be merry.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] Plague on him! his mirth is the melancholiest thing in the world.

SIR HUMPHREY. You saw, Mr. Wildish, how I run down fellows at Newmarket with my jests and my tricks. They took me for a put; but I out-roared 'em all, i'faith, and could have put them all in a mouse-hole.

WILDISH. How does my lord, your dear friend and patron?

SIR HUMPHREY. Oh, sir, his lordship is in good health. He is nobody without me, poor man: he loves wit and good company. I'll tell you, I'll tell you—

OLDWIT. Now we shall hear some wit and waggery!

SIR HUMPHREY. T'other day we were a hunting, and at a cold scent, one of his gentlemen, being alighted, stood by a plash of water; I sneaked behind and pushed him, I vow to Gad, up the knees.

OLDWIT. (OLDWIT *is big with laughter, then roars out*) Good, good! ha, ha, ha!

SIR HUMPHREY. Ha, ha, ha! But if you had seen his lordship laugh! the water trickled down his Honor's cheeks. Then, one Jeremy stood staring. I called him loudly and suddenly, and held my fingers thus: he turned suddenly, and hit his nose such a bump, that all the blood gushed out.—Ha, ha, ha!

OLDWIT. Look you there! Ha, ha, ha!—Well, well!

SIR HUMPHREY. But if you had seen his Honor chuckle and laugh, till he was black in the face! I twirled another fellow's hat

[1] my own.

over a little river that was not navigable, and he was forced to go a mile about to fetch it. I thought my lord would have killed himself! He desired me at last to forbear; he was not able to endure it.

WILDISH. My lord is a very merry man.

SIR HUMPHREY. Aye, Gad take me, as any's upon the face of the earth. But how goes wit at London?

OLDWIT. You are the chief genius, the high wit of the age.

WILDISH. Prithee, Mr. Oldwit, lay not that to my charge; you had as good accuse me of felony.

OLDWIT. Ne'er talk of that. Your pen has betrayed you, and we look upon you here to be the choicest wit of the times.

SIR HUMPHREY. And, i'faith, we can show you wit at Bury too.

WILDISH. What a devil, you won't make a wit of me, in spite of my teeth, will you?

OLDWIT. No, Nature has made you a wit. Why do you take it ill? I think it the greatest honor can be done to a man. I myself, simple as I stand here, was a wit in the last age: I was created Ben Jonson's son, in the Apollo. I knew Fletcher, my friend Fletcher, and his maid Joan. Well, I shall never forget him. I have supped with him at his house on the Bankside: he loved a fat loin of pork of all things in the world. And Joan his maid had her beer-glass of sack, and we all kissed her, i'faith, and were as merry as passed.

WILDISH. This was enough to make any man a wit.

OLDWIT. Puh! this was nothing. I was a critic at Blackfriars; but at Cambridge, none so great as I with Jack Cleaveland. But Tom Randolph[1] and I were hand and glove. Tom was a brave fellow—the most natural poet!

SIR HUMPHREY. They were brave fellows, but you wits nowadays out-top them all.

WILDISH. Zounds! I will have nothing to do with wit, I tell you.

OLDWIT. Pshaw, pshaw! But as I was telling you, you have seen many pretty things that were written in those times, that were mine. For example: one Mr. Murial, a fellow of Pembroke Hall, had a horse died; I writ this upon it.

Now cruel Mors
Has ta'n the horse
  Of Mr. Murial:
Ye scholars all
Of Pembroke Hall,
  Come to his burial.

Ha! hum! hum! Nay, I was good at epitaphs, both of man and beast.

SIR HUMPHREY. Ha, ha, ha! admirable good, i'faith, Mr. Oldwit!

WILDISH. Why, this was wit all over! You were an arrant wit!

OLDWIT. And that translation too was mine.

Mittitur in disco mihi Piscis ab Archiepisco-
Po, non ponatur, quia potus non mihi datur.

I sent a fish
In a great dish,
To the Archbish—
Hop was not there,
Because he gave me no beer.

(SIR HUMPHREY *sneaks behind and pins him and* WILDISH *together*)

Was not that lucky? Ha? humh—anon?

WILDISH. Most incomparable!

OLDWIT. I was such a rakehell, I would needs be a wit. My friends soon perceived I could not be a divine; so they sent me to the Inns of Court,[2] and there, i'faith, I peppered the Court with libels and lampoons. My wit was so bitter I 'scaped the pillory very narrowly, between you and I. But then, for good language and strong lines, none outdid me.

WILDISH. Why, thou wert a most plaguy wit, indeed!

OLDWIT. Aye, faith: and the poets were so in awe of me! You must know, I was a devilish biting fellow. Why, we had a couple of your poets here; Sir Humphrey and I made nothing of 'em, i'faith.

1 Q1 *Randol.*

2 See 51, 265 and n.

SIR HUMPHREY. Gad take me, they were but silly fellows! And yet, they say, they were cock poets.

WILDISH. That may very well be. We have poets as pretty fops as any about town, and are fitter for subjects of comedies than authors of anything.

Enter OLDWIT's Man

SERVANT. Sir, my Lord Bellamy is come to town, and my lady bid me tell you she has invited him to dinner.

OLDWIT. Ha! my lord come to Bury!—[*Discovering himself tied*] Gad forgive me, what's the matter? ha?

WILDISH. What's this?—What, are we linked together?

OLDWIT. Oh, you wag, you wag! this is Sir Humphrey! Ha, ha, ha!—You'll never give over.

SIR HUMPHREY. No, faith; not I.

OLDWIT. [*To* Servant] Go home: I'll follow you.

Exit Servant

Mr. Wildish, pray honor my house at dinner.

WILDISH. I will. My Lord Bellamy's my great friend.

OLDWIT. You shall have Sir Humphrey too. I'faith, we'll be merry, and turn the house out of the window.

SIR HUMPHREY. And I will roar—roar most exceedingly.

OLDWIT. Your humble servant.

SIR HUMPHREY. Your servant, sir; we shall see you?

WILDISH. I will wait on you.

Exeunt HUMPHREY *and* OLDWIT

—Here, Roger, my gloves, handkerchief, and my sword. My dear Bellamy in town! This is a happiness I dreamed not of. I thought he had been retired from the world and would not come to so public a place.—You puppy, these are your wits and fine gentlemen I have been plagued with! A curse on 'em! What must I undergo for the sake of my love!

VALET. I took 'em, sir, and so do most here, for fine gentlemen; but I wonder Mr. Oldwit is so merry after his disaster. And yet Sir Humphrey would make a man burst.

WILDISH. What disaster?

VALET. Why, sir, his eldest daughter, a great fortune by her mother (his first wife, for he has had three), about four months since fled, the night before he was to have married her to a fine Bury gentleman.

WILDISH. I heard so. But she has sent a letter to let him know that she will not be forced to marry. And for that end she will not appear till the day after she's at age to dispose of herself; and that then she will, and is in the meantime safe beyond his enquiry.

VALET. The young daughter is a great fortune by her mother, who was an heiress.

WILDISH. He has had a lucky hand at heiresses. But I must find out my dear Bellamy.

Exeunt

SCENE [II]. LORD BELLAMY'S *lodging*

[*Enter*] BELLAMY *and* [*his*] Page

BELLAMY. My kinswoman, who recommended thee, Charles, to my service, told me thou wert a young gentleman of the north whom she knew and was of kin to, and that thou hadst left thy guardian for harsh usage: and she engaged me to conceal and protect thee.

CHARLES. I can assure your lordship I have done nothing that can make you blush to own me.

BELLAMY. I believe thee. My kinswoman made me give my word to inquire no farther, and I have kept it.

CHARLES. You have, my good lord.

BELLAMY. I see thy education has been good, and find thou art a virtuous boy, and so ready in thy service thy diligence has almost outflown my thoughts. Yet it has kept pace with my desires, and everything thou dost, thou seem'st to do with pleasure.

CHARLES. I should be wicked else, having so excellent a lord and master.

BELLAMY. I use thee not as other noblemen their pages, who let gentlemen's sons

ride at the tails of their coaches, crowded with rascally footmen; 'tis a French mode. They used formerly to give 'em the same education with their sons, which made their fortunes; and 'twas a preferment then, for a gentleman's younger son. Now they are bred to box, and dice, and cheat with the footmen. After they're out of livery, perhaps they turn to the recreation of the highway; or the top of their fortune is to take up in some troop, and there's an end of 'em.

CHARLES. I must confess, your usage of me has been so noble that all the service of my life can never make return.

BELLAMY. Thou art too grateful. Thou charm'st me too with thy pretty voice: I'll breed thee up to be my friend. But, prithee, what's the reason that thou, who hast been ready to fly at my command, hast seemed to be uneasy, and unwilling to come to Bury?

CHARLES. 'Tis the public time of the Fair, when men of all countries flock hither; and, as I told your lordship, I was afraid of being discovered, and that my guardian would find me out and seize me. And Heaven knows, I had rather die than leave so good a lord.

BELLAMY. Kindest of youths, I love thee so, I will not part with thee, let who will discover thee.

CHARLES. My kind, good lord, let me kiss your hands.

BELLAMY. Besides, thou need'st not be seen in the Fair; only I am to dine at Mr. Oldwit's to-day.

CHARLES. [*Aside*] At Mr. Oldwit's! what do I hear?

BELLAMY. Thou art my little friend—I come to make love to his daughter. She knows me not, but I have seen her, and am extremely taken with her. The old man and I am agreed. I must entertain her with some music: I know thou'lt lend me thy voice.

CHARLES. [*Aside*] Oh Heaven and earth! what killing words are these! Ah me!

BELLAMY. Why dost thou sigh?

CHARLES. If your lordship marries—as no lady sure can resist you—I shall be cast off.

BELLAMY. Prithee think not so, dear boy; thou art too secure of my kindness for that.

CHARLES. I ne'er shall please your lady. Besides, the ladies never can endure their lords' favorite servants.

BELLAMY. I give thee my hand, I'll never part with thee till thou quittest me.

CHARLES. I'll quit my life when I do that. [*Aside*] Oh, fatal hour, wherein I saw those eyes! How many years of misery are like to hang upon it!

Enter WILDISH

BELLAMY. Ned! my dear Ned! welcome to my arms! This is a happy surprise.

WILDISH. My dear Bellamy! my dear peer! I could not embrace a mistress with more ardor! I thought you had been so retired I had lost you.

BELLAMY. That was your fault. I have as pleasant a house and seat as most in England, that is thine as much as mine, Ned.

WILDISH. But 'tis in the country—a pretty habitation for birds and cattle. But man is a herded animal, and made for towns and cities.

BELLAMY. So many pens of wild beasts upon two legs, undermining, lying in wait, preying upon, informing against, and hanging one another—a crowd of fools, knaves, whores, and hypocrites.

WILDISH. Hey, my renegado countryman! thou hadst once the respect due to good wine, fine women, music, wit and sense, and true pleasure.

BELLAMY. For good wine, I could never be drunk but I did some mad thing or other which made me ashamed to show my face. For women, those that were worth the having, were hard to come by and harder to put off. Besides, the immorality of the matter gave me anxiety of mind; I saw men of wit, when they came to understanding, gave it over: and, when a thing must be done, 'tis best to do it quickly.

WILDISH. Thou may'st as well say, since we must die, let's hang ourselves now. No, that's time enough when we are weary of

living. At your years, leave women and conversation! 122

BELLAMY. He that debauches private women is a knave, and injures others; and he that uses public ones, is a fool, and hurts himself. And for conversation, 'twas all run into parties and politics, and become dull and dangerous. The living were such knaves, I was resolved to converse with the dead, in my study. 130

WILDISH. But, in this late scene of action, the knaves are pretty well laid open: and, for all those parties, we could meet with choice company, truly honest, and with whom good wit and sense was stirring and would pass for current. 136

BELLAMY. Wit and sense may pass in a room with honest fellows, but noise and nonsense always carry it in the world.

WILDISH. Pox on this dull wisdom at our age! 'tis as unseasonable as snow in the dog-days. Canst thou think, my dear peer, that thy philosophy can tame the vigor of my appetites? 144

BELLAMY. I will no more suffer my appetites to master me than fire and water; they are good ministers while they can be kept under. 148

WILDISH. I'd not give a farthing for an appetite that can be curbed. My Stoic, I'd have my appetites high mettled, and run away with me. 152

BELLAMY. And I must always think a man a slave till he has conquered himself: for my part, I had almost as lief be in subjection to another's appetites as to my own.

WILDISH. This is spleen—wind in the hypochondriac's pent. Why, thou wilt prophesy at least. 159

BELLAMY. Come, dear Ned, we'll debate this matter at more leisure: time will make you of my mind. For I observe, all men of wit reclaim, and only coxcombs persevere to the end of debauchery. But prithee, what makes thee hereabouts? I'll lay my life there's some wench or other in the way.

WILDISH. May be, that may be somewhat; but at present I come to ease myself from the swearing, lying, roaring, vaporing, cozening noise and tumult of Newmarket. But I thought thou hadst renounced all crowds, and should as soon have expected a hermit here. 173

BELLAMY. A little time may satisfy you I have reason.

WILDISH. Ha! Bell, what pretty boy is this? Ha! 177

BELLAMY. He is a gentleman's son. He serves me at present. I'll tell thee more *entre nous*; but, in the meantime, he and my little concert shall entertain you. 181

Exit CHARLES

WILDISH. This is somewhat.

BELLAMY. I will not live like an ordinary hunting, hawking puppy. I'll have my city pleasures in the country—of which good music being one, I'll spare some rogues, some dogs, and horses, to have that good. 187

Enter CHARLES *with instruments*

WILDISH. I have been visited this morning by three most confounded fops that ever plagued me yet, and they talked of nothing but the wit and breeding of Bury—Trim, Sir Humphrey Noddy, and Mr. Oldwit. 192

BELLAMY. There are those things in Bury, but as 'tis in religion—least among those who talk of them most. Men are always proudest of their foibles, and keep their strengths concealed. If a fellow has but a difficulty of speaking, or stutters, his tongue will never lie still. 199

WILDISH. A fellow that has one leg shorter than another, will never stand still, but hop, hop, hop, round, round, round.

BELLAMY. Observe any fellow that has a stinking breath, as if a voice were not intended to be heard but smelt, will speak in your very nose: and turn round as often as you will, he turns with you, and your nostrils must have it. [*To* CHARLES] Come, begin. (*Song*) 209

WILDISH. 'Tis very pretty, and delicately sung.

BELLAMY. Now I have got thee in the country, I'll carry thee to my house and make a convert of thee. 214

Enter La Roch, *a French peruke-maker, with his* Man

Wildish. Hey! La Roch, what makes you here?

La Roch. Serviteur, monsieur; my lor, vot serviteur: I see your laquais below, dat make me come up to kiss your hands.

Bellamy. How now, Monsieur Cutbeard? what makes you at Bury Fair?

La Roch. Dis is de place dat is fameux for de pretty garl wid de cheveux blond, de farie hair. My man and I come for buy de vite lock; indeed, to gette de monee to makee de pot boyle, my lor.

Wildish. [*Aside*] A thought comes into my head: it shall be so. I will have some diversion while I am here.

La Roch. Dat bee de last peruke I send your lordship? Begar, 'tis fine 'air, curl delicate, *morbleu!* You talke o' de Chedreux,[1] he is nobodee to mee; dere is no man can travaille vid mee. Monsieur Wildish has gotte my peruke on his head. Let me see, here is de hair, de curl, de bouckle; ver good, ver good. If dat fool Chedreux make de peruke like mee, I vill be hanga.

Wildish. Hold, good Monsieur Snip-snap, I have another employment for you. Were you ever here before?

La Roch. No.

Wildish. That's well; I must have you be a French count. I remember we had a Count de Brion at London passed upon the choicest sparks and best-bred men and ladies. I will have this fellow pass upon the fops of Bury, and amuse the wiser sort.

Bellamy. You will never be without some mad frolic or other: but this, certainly, must be very pleasant.

Wildish. Of all female creatures my aversion is to the Lady Fantast and her affected, conceited, disdainful daughter. I will have this fellow personate a French count and make love to the daughter.

La Roch. Ha, ha, ha, de French count! dat be ver well. Ha, ha! Make de love! begar, I come for make de monee. Love! *Morbleu!* de French count spende de monee; de French peruke-maker make de French count, he loosee de monee.

Wildish. You shall lose no money, you puppy; my man is acquainted with all this country, and shall help your man to buy the wenches' hair—the prettiest wenches in England. And if you be a French count, you shall have the wenches too; all the town will run after you. You'll be courted by everybody, feasted, and invited to balls and all meetings; but the Lady Fantast and her daughter will be mad after you.

La Roch. Ha, ha, ha! de French count! Ver well indeed.—Ha, ha! I make de French count! Begar, monsieur, I havè de count of my familee; I am a gentilman of Fraunce. Indeed, my parents did condiscent to lette me makè de peruke, for I delighted in it.

Wildish. Go, you rogue; you shall do this, I am resolved on't, or I'll cut your throat. You shall have clothes and ornaments of me. Here are wholesale men: three or four suits for footmen will do, and we'll help you to the men too. I'll bear all the charges. I'll do it if it cost me a hundred pound.

Bellamy. Are you in earnest?

Wildish. Aye, by Heaven, it shall be. You shall be called Monsieur le Count de Cheveux; you shall be entertained like a prince; the women will lie with you as if the devil were in them.

La Roch. Ha! dat be ver good indeed! I was not bred to make peruke; it vas for my diversion I did ittè. I spent my time among de gens de quality in de Academy.

Wildish. [*Aside*] Yes, to shave them, thou true picture of a French scoundrel!

La Roch. Dere I did appen to kille de count for my *honneur*.

Wildish. Then there is a count missing; you shall supply his place.

La Roch. I flay,[2] dey seize on my land and my chateaux; and begar, it vas ver well for me dat I did delight in make de peruke ven I vas young, indeed.

Wildish. This good breeding of yours will qualify you excellently. Why, you'll be

1 Cf. 51, 307.

2 fly.

adored by the ladies. But of all, I charge you to court Mrs. Fantast; commend her wit and breeding.

BELLAMY. Suppose she falls in love with him in earnest?

WILDISH. I'd give a hundred pound to see that. Well, Monsieur le Count, let's to my lodging and fit you for this enterprise.

LA ROCH. Hold, hold. If dey find me out, vill dey not wippè de French count? Begar, I no love to be wippè.

WILDISH. Upon my honor, I'll protect you.

LA ROCH. Vel, vel; no more to be said. I am Monsieur le Count de Cheveux. *Serviteur, Monsieur my lor, vot très humble serviteur.* Fa la ha la. (*Sings*)

WILDISH. Come, my lord, your humble servant; we are to meet at dinner. I must about this business; my heart is set upon it: 'twill make an admirable farce.

BELLAMY. Get thee gone, Ned; thou art a mad fellow. I'll go and take a little air.

LA ROCH. *Allons, monsieur.* Fa la la la la!

If my wise conduct you please to rely on,
I'll make as good a count as Count de Brion.

Exeunt

ACT II

[SCENE I. *A room in* Mr. OLDWIT'*s house*]

[*Enter*] MISTRESS GERTRUDE

GERTRUDE. Well, I am weary of the life I lead here. Never poor creature was so teased as I am still with my stepmother and her daughter, the old cuckoo and the young, that tire me continually with the same notes of wit and breeding, and, having themselves nothing but folly and affectation, are always reproaching me for want of both.

Enter LUCE

LUCE. Madam, my lady Madam Fantast, having attired herself in her morning habiliments, is ambitious of the honor of your ladyship's company to survey the Fair.

GERTRUDE. (*Aside*) Here's a foul copy of one of 'em. I see this folly is contagious. [*To* LUCE] Tell her I'll wait on her.

LUCE. She will suddenly arrive at this place, where she desires the interview may be betwixt you.

GERTRUDE. I will haste for my hoods and gloves and the rest of my movables, and be here instantly. *Exit* GERTRUDE

LUCE. A fine young lady this if she had but half the wit and breeding of my lady.

Enter LADY FANTAST *and her daughter*, MISTRESS FANTAST

Madam, Mrs. Gatty will kiss your ladyship's hands here incontinently.

LADY FANTAST. Come, my sweet daughter, consider what I have said. Thou art in thy maturity of blooming age. I have bred thee to the very acme and perfection of Bury breeding, which is inferior to none in this our island—dancing, singing, guitar, French master. And I'll say that for thee, my jewel, thou hast sacrificed all thy endeavors to attain thy education, which, corroborated by thy acuteness of parts, have rendered thee exactly accomplished, and, together with the excellence of thy beauty, justly admired by the amorous males and envied by the malicious females.

MRS. FANTAST. To all that which the world calls wit and breeding, I have always had a natural tendency, a *penchen*,[1] derived, as the learned say, *ex traduce*,[2] from your ladyship. Besides, the great prevalence of your ladyship's most shining example has perpetually stimulated me to the sacrificing all my endeavors towards the attaining of those inestimable jewels, than which nothing in the universe can be so much "*à mon gré*,"[3] as the French say. And for beauty, madam, the stock I am enriched with comes by emanation from your ladyship, who has been long held a paragon of perfection—most *charmant*, most *tuant*.[4]

1 Her French for *penchant*.
2 by heredity.
3 to my taste.
4 Lit. "killing"; not French usage.

LADY FANTAST. Ah, my dear child: I! alas, alas! Time has been—and yet I am not quite gone. But thou hast those attractions which I bewail the want of—poetry, Latin, and the French tongue.

MRS. FANTAST. I must confess, I have ever had a tendress for the Muses, and have a due reverence for Helicon, and Parnassus, and the Graces. But heroic numbers upon love and honor are most *ravissant*, most *suprenant*, and a tragedy is so *touchant*! I die at a tragedy; I'll swear I do.

LADY FANTAST. I must confess, my dear, thy wit has more of notoriety than thy beauty since the pretty various diversions of thy pen have transmitted thy fame of wit beyond the narrow limits of an island. But it is now high time to manifest thy judgment in the disposal of thy person, and thou hast rejected a multitude of lovers.

MRS. FANTAST. I am so much indebted to nature and education, that I am resolved not unequally to dispose of that person which (without vanity I may say) nature by its genuine bounty, and art by its friendly additions, have rendered not *disagreeable*, or void of *attraits*; but all want of wit and breeding does affect me with that unconquerable *chagrin*, that, eh Gud, I cannot suffer such fellows.

LADY FANTAST. Mine own dear daughter, to a hair! And, I must confess, we are troubled enough with it in Mr. Oldwit, his daughter, and his companions. Had not my jointure been somewhat entangled, I had never had him. But Mr. Trim is as fine a gentleman as the sun in all his circuit sees.

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, my Eugenius! He is a finished piece of humanity, but has not the estate I would have.

LADY FANTAST. Sir Humphrey Noddy—

MRS. FANTAST. Has a very good estate, but wants the noble accomplishments of my Eugenius, whom I intend to preserve for my platonic servant.

Enter MISTRESS GERTRUDE

—Sweet Madam Gatty, I have some minutes impatiently expected your arrival, that I might do myself the great honor to kiss your hands, and enjoy the favor of your company into the Fair—which I see, out of my window, begins to fill apace.

GERTRUDE. I got ready as soon as e'er I could, and am now come to wait on you.

LADY FANTAST. Oh, fie, daughter! will you never attain, by mine and my dear daughter's examples, to a more polite way of expression, and a nicer form of breeding? Fie, fie! "I come to wait on you!" You should have said, "I assure you, madam, the honor is all on my side, and I cannot be ambitious of a greater than the enjoyment of the sweet society of so excellent a person." This is breeding.

MRS. FANTAST. Ah, this had been *à propos*: observe my lady.

GERTRUDE. Breeding! Why, this had been a flam[1]—a mere flam.

MRS. FANTAST. *Eh, mon Dieu!* this had been delicate *et bien tournée.* Call generous compliments flams!

LADY FANTAST. Thus you had shown true breeding.

GERTRUDE. Breeding! I know no breeding necessary but discretion to distinguish company and occasions; and common sense, to entertain persons according to their ranks; besides making a curtsey not awkwardly, and walking with one's toes out.

MRS. FANTAST. Eh Gud, eh Gud!

LADY FANTAST. Let me tell you, you are a pert young thing: you are a curious judge, indeed, of the art of refined conversation.

GERTRUDE. Art! Conversation ought to be free, easy, and natural.

MRS. FANTAST. Eh Gud, eh Gud! Sweet madam, despise not art. Can there be any conversation well dressed, as I may say, without French in the first place to lard it?

GERTRUDE. Some fops indeed think so, that use it in every sentence.

LADY FANTAST. Nothing is so confident as ignorance.

MRS. FANTAST. *Ars non habet inimicum præter ignorantem.*[2]

1 trick.
2 Art has no foe except ignorance.

LADY FANTAST. Look you there! I have bred my daughter a linguist.

GERTRUDE. A lady may look after the affairs of a family, the demeanor of her servants, take care of her nursery, take all her accounts every week, obey her husband, and discharge all the offices of a good wife with her native tongue; and this is all I desire to arrive at. And this is to be of some use in a generation, while your fantastic lady, with all those trappings and ornaments you speak of, is good for no more than a dancing mare, to be led about and shown.

MRS. FANTAST. Eh, *mon Dieu!* pray forbear, sweet madam, forbear! I am not able to hear this blasphemy against true breeding.

GERTRUDE. It must needs be pretty French one learns of an Irishman at Bury. I believe 'tis a kind of bastard French.

LADY FANTAST. Good Mrs. Gatty, you are very confident.

Enter OLDWIT *and hearkens unseen*

MRS. FANTAST. Whatever you do, never speak against art.

GERTRUDE. Art stiffens and spoils conversation, as painting does faces. If you hear never so many florid coxcombs, they speak all alike; and see never so many painted women, they look all alike.

MRS. FANTAST. *Eh, mon Dieu! Quel facheux!*[1] *Ex quovis ligno,*[2] &c. Mercury's statue is not made of every wood.

LADY FANTAST. Look you, I know your secret cogitations: because you are so ill bred as to look like a tallow thing, and will not improve your complexion by art, you obliquely reflect upon me and my daughter for our melioration of nature.

GERTRUDE. Come, come, madam! If you be ready, without a compliment, to go the Fair, I am ready to go with you: but, by my troth, if you look for compliments, you must get them somewhere else. Come, I'll lead you. *Exit* GERTRUDE

MRS. FANTAST. Ill breeding, *au dernier point*![3] Oh, my *chagrin*! I kiss your ladyship's hand. *Exit* MISTRESS FANTAST

LADY FANTAST. [*As* OLDWIT *approaches*] Oh, Mr. Oldwit, would you have been here; you would have heard a fine deal of ill breeding from your daughter Gatty.

OLDWIT. I was here at part of your discourse, and I heard nothing but good sense from her.

LADY FANTAST. Nay, she's like you.

OLDWIT. Gad take me, I am glad she is not like you.

LADY FANTAST. I know your ill breeding; but 'tis a shame you have not better cultivated your daughter, as I have mine.

OLDWIT. Cultivate! A pox on your affected stuff! Should I have made her an affected ass, to be laughed at, as you and your daughter are?

LADY FANTAST. Prodigy of ignorance! My daughter and I laughed at? Whom even the Court, when we are there, perpetually gaze at and admire, and all the beauties and gallants here make their court to!

OLDWIT. A great many flutterers do flock about you, indeed, as small birds would about a cast of owls, to wonder at you.

LADY FANTAST. This is most stupendious.

OLDWIT. A pox on this perpetual noise about wit and breeding! You made my daughter by my first wife run away, with teasing her and persuading me to be such an ass to press her to marry one of your formal fops, against her will; and now you are plaguing this poor girl to make her run away too. But I have agreed upon articles with one that will soon rid you of her.

LADY FANTAST. Most exorbitant and amazing! 'Twere well if beholding us could do any good upon her.

OLDWIT. [*Aside*] No doubt it will, as the sight of the drunken slaves did upon the Spartan children. There's wit and reading for her!

LADY FANTAST. Were not we well fortified by art and nature, we might be obnoxious to the taint of your and her most unsavory

1 how unpleasant.
2 Latin proverb, translated in next sentence.
3 to the highest point.

rusticity. While all the "*beau monde*," as my daughter says, are with us, in the drawing-room, you have none but ill-bred, witless drunkards with you, in your smoking-room. What punishment do I deserve for making alliance with so much ill breeding?

OLDWIT. What plagues have I met with in marrying an affected old lady, who, with her daughter, take themselves to be wits! Their tongues never lie still: at dinner they must have the whole discourse; at dinner, the common-crier, were he there, could not be heard—no, not another woman. There's my friend Juvenal for you—wit and breeding!

LADY FANTAST. My daughter and I no wit, and you have it? This is most astonishing! Ha, ha, ha! If ever you had wit, it is obliterated, antiquated, and buried in the grave of oblivion.

OLDWIT. No wit! Ounds, now you provoke me. Shall I, who was Jack Fletcher's friend, Ben Jonson's son, and afterwards an intimate crony of Jack Cleaveland and Tom Randolph, have kept company with wits, and been accounted a wit these fifty years, live to be deposed by you?

LADY FANTAST. Ha, ha, ha!

OLDWIT. Ha, ha, ha! I, that was a judge at Blackfriars, writ before Fletcher's works and Cartwright's, taught even Taylor and the best of them to speak! I cannot go to London yet but the wits get me amongst them, and the players will get me to rehearsal to teach them, even the best of them. And you to say I have no wit! I say, you have not, nor ever had, any beauty.

LADY FANTAST. Nay, now, Mr. Oldwit, I can bear no longer. Shall I, that in my youth charmed all the gallants of that time, even to fascination; and in my widowhood, but five years since, was adored by lords spiritual and temporal, and captivated several of their hearts, be thus calumniated? Know, I have more beauty than you can make use of.

OLDWIT. Indeed, towards you I am somewhat frigid; but some in the world know I have a colt's tooth.

LADY FANTAST. I should serve you right to have others find out my colt's tooth too, though thou canst not.

OLDWIT. Thy tooth! the devil of one thou hast but what came out of Bow Lane; three remaining stumps there are, that look like three broken pillars in a ruined cloister. And there's wit for you now, and a clinch[1] to boot.

LADY FANTAST. Poor, railing buffoon—there wit! Well, there are some of another mind concerning my beauty.

OLDWIT. Prithee take thy course with them. Whoever commits adultery with thee, it must be merely the act of the devil; there's nothing of the flesh in it. What a pox! You and your daughter are notorious for out-painting all the Christian Jezebels in England.

LADY FANTAST. 'Tis false, rude fellow; we only use a wash, and lay on a little red.

OLDWIT. No more does a wall: but you, for your part, are fain to fill up the chinks in your rivelled skin, as house-painters do the cracks in wainscot, with putty. Pox on't! you would by art appear a beauty, and are by nature a mere mummy. There's wit for you again! 'Gad, I'll pepper you with wit.

LADY FANTAST. Did I not despise thee for thy want of wit and breeding, these barbarous contumelies would exhaust tears from my eyes.

OLDWIT. If thou shouldst cry, it would make streaks down thy face as the tears of the tankard do upon my fat host's belly-pieces. There's wit again for you!

LADY FANTAST. Farewell, brute.

Exit LADY FANTAST

OLDWIT. Fare thee well. He that would have the devil more damned, let him get him to marry a she-wit. Now for the Fair. Here! who waits?

Enter a Servant

Bid the cook get dinner within two hours, at farthest. [*Exeunt*]

[1] pun.

SCENE II. *The Fair, with a great many shops and shows, and all sorts of people walking up and down*

MISTRESS FANTAST *and* GERTRUDE, *masked*

GERTRUDE. 'Tis pleasant to observe the mixture of people here.

MRS. FANTAST. Ah, how pleasant 'twould be if none but the *beau monde* made their *promenade* here! But I hate the *canaille.*[1]

MILLINER. What d'ye lack, ladies? fine mazarine[2] hoods, fontanges,[3] girdles, sable-tippets, choice of fine gloves and ribbands.

HOSIER. Stockins, silk stockins! Choice of silk stockins! Very fine silk stockins!

PERFUMER. All sorts of essences, perfumes, pulvilios, sweet-bags, perfumed boxes for your hoods and gloves, all sorts of sweets for your linen, Portugal sweets to burn in your chamber! What d'ye lack? What d'ye buy? 16

GERTRUDE. I have no such contempt for the common people; they come near nature, and have no art or affectation. And there are a thousand fops made by art, for one fool by nature. 21

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, fie! *Odi profanum vulgus,*[4] etc.

INDIAN-GOWNMAN. Fine morning-gowns, very rich Indian stuffs! Choice of fine atlases. Fine morning-gowns! 26

GOLDSMITH. Will you please to raffle for a teapot, a pair of candlesticks, a couple of sconces?

Enter MR. TRIM

TRIM. Not all the clouds assembled in the firmament can hide, or can eclipse so muffle the sun, but we poor mortals know it shines, and feel the warm effects. Why should Dorinda think to blunt her pointed glories, or conceal the radiant lustre of her conquering beams? 36

MRS. FANTAST. I see, to the quick-sighted Eugenius nothing is obscure. Nor could Eugenius in the dark be hid; that golden tongue and that sweet eloquence would soon reveal him, as the proscribed senator was by his perfumes betrayed. 42

TRIM. How does the bright Dorinda make me blush when she commends my eloquence; and in that very act so much exceeds me!

MRS. FANTAST. Fine! very fine! *bien tourné.*[5] That thought's very *recherchée.*[6] Observe, madam, this is a true witty and well-bred gentleman. 49

GERTRUDE. [*Aside*] Now really, madam, between you and me, this man appears to me a most extraordinary shallow coxcomb as one can possibly see in a summer's day. 53

MRS. FANTAST. Eh Gud, eh Gud! Poor soul, I pity thee; but, *assurément*, nothing can be more engaging than the wit and breeding of Eugenius. 57

TRIM. I see there is no contending with Dorinda. She will have the ascendant over poor Eugenius; his small pinnace must strike sail to her admiral, Wit. 61

GERTRUDE. [*Aside to* MRS. FANTAST] These fops are very happy; for if an archangel should tell 'em they were fops, they would not believe it. 64

TRIM. Let me present to the fair Dorinda's hands a little offspring of my brain, the tribute of my morning service.

MRS. FANTAST. I was just going to present Eugenius with the issue of my teeming Muse, who was delivered this morning of a pastoral. I must needs say, she had a good time, for she had an easy labor. *Aurora Musis amica.* But pray, let me read yours first. 74

Enter LUCE

LUCE. Oh, madam, does your ladyship hear the news?

MRS. FANTAST. What news, Luce?

LUCE. Oh, madam, such news as perhaps may not be ungrateful to your ladyship's ears. There is now, even now, arrived a noble French count, the finest person my eyes yet e'er beheld. I saw him, heard him speak; he speaks English. He has the prettiest

1 rabble. 2 A deep blue. 3 A high headdress.
4 I hate the unconsecrated rabble.—Horace, *Odes*, III, i, 1.
5 well-put. 6 choice.

charming way! No lady sure can e'er resist him.

TRIM. Who can this be?

MRS. FANTAST. Ha! a French count?—Oh, lord, I am afraid I am not in order enough; he'll certainly make addresses to me.—How is my dress?

(*She lets fall* TRIM's *paper. He stoops to take it up, and offers it her; she neglects it*)

LUCE. Very French, and very exact.

MRS. FANTAST. The report of me has certainly brought him hither. Heaven! A French count, say you? Now we shall see breeding in perfection, and I am glad I shall have the opportunity of appearing before so great a judge.

GERTRUDE. How do you know but this French count may be an arrant coxcomb?

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, madam, madam! I beseech you, betray not your ill breeding. A French count a coxcomb! *Mon Dieu!*

TRIM. It is not, my Dorinda—

MRS. FANTAST. When shall our eyes be blest with the sight? When, think'st thou, will he make this place happy?

LUCE. My eyes saluted him first upon the Change. His landlord, who was with him, told me what he was. From thence I followed him to Cook Row, and so through the Fair to the Bowling-green. His air, his mien, and his deportment charmed me so, I could not leave him. There I saw him ride the flying horse, with his equipage, which much delighted him.

MRS. FANTAST. Shall we go to the Bowling-green? My expectation is on tiptoes till I behold him.

LUCE. That's a rare saying! I'll remember that.—My expectation is on tiptoes!—Madam, he is gone from thence, and said he would be in the Fair presently.

Enter SIR HUMPHREY NODDY

TRIM. This sudden indifference towards me seems abrupt and temerarious.

(*The shop-keepers cry all their goods again, one after another, and then all together*)

1ST WOMAN. Fine mellow pears; fine bergamy pears; fine Norwich pears!

2D WOMAN. Fine ginger-bread: very good ginger-bread!

SIR HUMPHREY. Yonder's my mistress; I know her, for all her mask. I'll present her with a fairing.

(SIR HUMPHREY *buys some ginger-bread*)

Enter several Gentlewomen, *two country wenches and two country fellows, and people of all sorts, and walk about the Fair*

SIR HUMPHREY. Madam, 'tis not a mask can conceal you from a lover. Whether I see you or no, my heart will leap up to my teeth whenever you come in presence, as a dead body will bleed at the arrival of the murtherer. Is not that well said, Mr. Trim?

(*Gives* TRIM *a devilish kick on the shins*)

TRIM. 'Sdeath, my shins!

MRS. FANTAST. Men's hearts seldom come so near their mouths.

SIR HUMPHREY. Madam, let me present you with your first fairing[1]—a heart.

GERTRUDE. Of ginger-bread?

SIR HUMPHREY. Aye, 'faith, pretty lady.

GERTRUDE. Is it a true image of your own? Did you sit for it?

SIR HUMPHREY. Ha! ha! ha! a very good jest! Udsbud, there's a pair of gloves of the same mettle, to stop your pretty mouth. And, Mr. Trim, here's a wise cap, befitting your gravity and the solidity of your parts, for you.

TRIM. Sir, there's an old adage that says, Familiarity breeds contempt. I am past those juvenile jokes.

SIR HUMPHREY. Alas, poor old gentleman! Come, madam, walk and let us see the diversions of the Fair. I warrant you, I'll make you merry.

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, this count! Did you see the count?

SIR HUMPHREY. No: but I hear there's a flaming French beau come to town. [*To* TRIM] Will your lordship raffle a bout or two?

[1] See page 47, line 112 and n.

GERTRUDE. [*Aside*] The activity of this monkey is as ridiculous as the gravity of that baboon.

Enter WILDISH, *and walks*

—Oh Heav'n! Wildish here! Down, down, my heart! Thou foolish heart, why dost thou flutter so? I see he is thus far a man of honor; if all he says in his letters were as true! And yet I know not whether I should wish it.

Enter LADY FANTAST

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, madam! here is the rarest news! Have you heard of the French count?

LADY FANTAST. Aye, my dear, and therefore am come to bless my eyes. His fame is diffused throughout the town. They say he is the finest gentleman that ever came to Bury.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] Good! It takes as I could wish.

(WILDISH *plucks* GERTRUDE *by the sleeve*)

GERTRUDE. How now, sir! who are you?

WILDISH. One who has lost a heart and apprehends you for it.

GERTRUDE. You are somewhat free of carriage.

WILDISH. Think not, my pretty madcap, that a piece of velvet can conceal you; your eyes strike at everyone you level at, like lightning through a cloud.

GERTRUDE. Very pretty! Shall I oblige Mr. Trim with this fine expression? He'll give you any money for it.

TRIM. Sir—

WILDISH. [*Aside*] Now is this fop setting out his bum for a smart bout at compliment.

TRIM. It is so great an honor to our town—

WILDISH. Sir, your most humble servant.

(WILDISH *turns quick upon his toes, and leaves* TRIM *bowing*)

TRIM. Is this his breeding? Indeed, when I left him, he led me not to the door of his lodging.

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, *mon Dieu!* here is that London wit that is a laugher and scoffer! I hear he has made a lampoon upon Bury. I hate the fellow.

LADY FANTAST. He a wit!—Mr. Trim or Sir Humphrey would make nothing of him.

WILDISH. [*To* GERTRUDE] Look you, my dear madcap, I must love you, and will love you. Say what you can, do what you can, I will always haunt you while I am alive, and never leave you when I am dead.

GERTRUDE. Nay hold, good Mr. Hothead; I doubt not but our lives will differ so, that we shall part when we are dead, sir, whatever we do living. And a sure way to part while we are alive would be to marry, which Heaven forbid; then it would certainly follow to some purpose.

WILDISH. The steel shall sooner willingly desert the loadstone than I my pretty miss.

GERTRUDE. You are not sure in earnest.

WILDISH. By Heav'n and all the powers—

GERTRUDE. I mind vows in love no more than oaths in anger. That I were sure once that you were in love with me!

WILDISH. There is nothing to prove it to you which I will not undertake.

GERTRUDE. Your hand upon't.

WILDISH. My heart upon't, which here I present you.

GERTRUDE. Now have I one to domineer over. Tremble! for I will make thee such an example as shall be a terror to thy sex, and revenge all the insolences committed upon mine.

WILDISH. I am prepared for all thy tyranny, good Semiramis.

GERTRUDE. I will make thee fetch and carry, and come at my foot like a spaniel.

WILDISH. And I will persevere so, I'll make thee relent, tho' thou wert a devil.

SIR HUMPHREY. Come, gentlemen and ladies; come down guineas apiece, and raffle for a teapot. Come, Jack Trim—Jack! Mr. Wildish, ladies!

TRIM. "Jack! Jack!" Ill-bred!—For complaisance and breeding sake, I'll do't.

Enter LORD BELLAMY

The Lord Bellamy!—My lord, I can assure your lordship, there is not a person among the race of mankind—

BELLAMY. Sir, I am your humble servant. —My dear Ned! I see here is all the good company.

WILDISH. My dear lord, I am glad you are come. Here is the best company in Bury.

BELLAMY. 'Tis a delicate morning: I have been sucking in the sweetest air in England.

SIR HUMPHREY. My noble lord, your most humble servant! 'Tis indeed very fine weather; it used to be Bury-foul, instead of Bury-fair. Is not that a pretty clinch, Jack?

(*He gives him a rap on the back*)

TRIM. Sir, let me tell you, there is a Spanish proverb, which says, *Whego de manos, whego de villanos.*

SIR HUMPHREY. Do you call me villain in Spanish? I shall reckon with you for that.

BELLAMY. I'll put in for a raffle with these ladies. Come, madam, will you raffle for a heart?

GERTRUDE. No, my lord; that is usually a light, hollow thing, and not sterling neither. I am for massy plate that will endure the touch.

BELLAMY. Mine will endure the strictest touch. If your beauty be equal to your shape and wit, you conquer all you look on.

Enter CHARLES

CHARLES. [*Aside*] What do I see? that is my sister! He is already fixed upon my ruin, my death.—Sister, I ne'er till now could wish thy beauty less. If not discovered, I am at least undone.

BELLAMY. Come, Charles, thou shalt raffle too: here's a guinea for him.

Enter OLDWIT

OLDWIT. My lord, your lordship's most humble servant.

BELLAMY. Sir, I kiss your hands.

OLDWIT. What a pox, is this puss my wife here? I'll lay my life she hears of the French count: I was in hopes she would have been sullen, and we might have had the house to ourselves. Come, come, off with your foolish masks.—My lord, this is my wife.

LADY FANTAST. And this is my daughter.

(BELLAMY *salutes her*)

BELLAMY. [*Aside*] I dare swear she is.

OLDWIT. Mr. Wildish.

(WILDISH *salutes* LADY FANTAST *and* MRS. FANTAST)

—This, my lord, is my daughter.

BELLAMY. Madam, your father has commanded me to do myself the honor of the world I am most ambitious of.

GERTRUDE. You are resolved, my lord, your ambition shall be no danger to the Government?

BELLAMY. I own no government but yours: others but rule the body; you, the mind.

CHARLES. [*Aside*] How can I hear my own sad funeral peal!

OLDWIT. Mr. Wildish, my daughter.

WILDISH. [*To* GERTRUDE] So, madam, you have my heart. 'Tis flown; I could not hold it. Look to it, and make much on't, and see that it comes to no damage. I shall require it whole and safe.

GERTRUDE. 'Tis a light one, and always ready to whistle off at any game, and as ready to be lured back again. But, if I have it, I'll use it so it shall be glad to be gone.

WILDISH. [*Embracing her*] That beauty cannot harbor so much cruelty! Oh, that this kiss would last to eternity!

GERTRUDE. Raptures are no more signs of love than huffing is of courage.

(SIR HUMPHREY *steals to* OLDWIT *as he leans upon his cane, strikes it away, and flings him almost upon his nose*)

OLDWIT. Oh, you arch wag you! are you there? Ha, ha, ha!

SIR HUMPHREY. Yes, that I am. Ha, ha, ha! Come, down with your guinea. Now we have enough for a teapot and a pair of sconces.

BELLAMY. She's delicately handsome as an angel! What thinkest thou, my boy?

CHARLES. With submission, my good lord, I think she is mortal: I am not surprised with her beauty. Look narrowly; does she not look like a shrew?

BELLAMY. No; she is all sweetness in perfection. (*They throw the dice in order*)

CHARLES. I wish you find her not so: Fame whispers somewhat of that kind.

Enter the French Count *with his equipage. The shop-keepers all cry their things. The* Count *stares about him, munching of pears*

LADY FANTAST. Daughter, daughter! Yonder comes the French count! It must be he.

MRS. FANTAST. *Mon Dieu! it is he!* Nay, if quality or breeding 'scapes my eye, I have lost my cunning. What an air! What a mien is there!

COUNT. Nicholas.

NICHOLAS. Monsieur?

COUNT. Takè de notice of dose two garle; vatch dem. Dey have de very fine ayre.

MRS. FANTAST. His person is *charmant*. *Tuant* his air, victorious his mien: *mon pauvre cœur!*

WILDISH. [*Aside*] I could not wish better success.

GERTRUDE. A most *charmant*, *tuant* mien, in eating bergamies: he out-crunches a schoolboy on a holiday. I'll lay my life, he is an arrant coxcomb.

COUNT. Page, settè my cravat-string. Ver well, ver well.

LADY FANTAST. He is an incomparable person!

BELLAMY. [*Aside*] Thy farce is like to take admirably: the rogue looks very stately and fantastical!

WILDISH. [*Aside*] No gudgeons ever took their baits more greedily.

COUNT. [*Approaching*] *Monsieur, serviteur très-humble.* Have you forgottè me?

WILDISH. Monsieur le Count de Cheveux!

COUNT. De same. I had de *honneur* to wait upon you vid my regiment of gens d'armes, on de right attaque at Luxemburg. Oh, my Lor Bellamy, I am surprisè ver much! You did charge my regiment at de battle of Monts. I vill say no more of dat; but, begar, you did make us turnè de back, vich de regiment never did before, nor since. But is all one for dat, *serviteur très-humble.*

BELLAMY. The rogue acts it admirably!

WILDISH. You are welcome into England.

COUNT. I come to see de fine lady, de grand beauteè English; vich, begar, is beyond all de varle. Yes, indeed.

BELLAMY. You have learned the language?

COUNT. I speak a littel. I did keepè de company vid de English officeers; de ver brave gentleman indeed, to learnè de langage; for I did resolvè to com dis plas, for see de beauteè, de wit of England.

TRIM. Perhaps your most auspicious stars could not have guided your wand'ring course to a more proper region of the earth than this little city of Bury, for the full satisfaction of both these curiosities you are pleased to mention. Nor is in all the regions of earth you have surveyed a person more devoted to your service than your most humble servant, John Trim.

COUNT. Monsieur Jean Trim, you do me de grand *honneur*; begar, me am your humble *serviteur*. [*Aside*] *Jerny bleu*,[1] dis fellow be one great fool indeed.

WILDISH. That is the lady and daughter I told you of. This is the lady's husband.

COUNT. Is ver well: lette me alone for dat.

[*Exeunt* GERTRUDE, WILDISH, *and* BELLAMY]

MRS. FANTAST. A most admirable person of a man! His eyes *brillant*, and *fière*! My heart is gone. He may say, as Cæsar did, *Veni, vidi, vici.*

LADY FANTAST. My eyes never beheld a parallel.

MRS. FANTAST. Eh Gud! how the French noblesse outshines ours! Methinks they look like tailors to 'em.

SIR HUMPHREY. Monsieur, your most humble servant: welcome to Bury, as I may say.

OLDWIT. My lord Count, you are heartily welcome to Bury, and I beg the honor of your company at dinner, at my house.

[1] A mild oath.

COUNT. Messieurs,[1] me kissè your hands. Me did tinke to invitè de shief magistratè—I don know vat you call him—oh—is alderman, to takè de collation vid me; buttè me can no refusè de faveur.

MRS. FANTAST. I am transported with joy!

LADY FANTAST. Daughter, speak to him in French; he seems already captivated with your looks.

COUNT. You are appy in de conversation of de very fine ladeè; buttè to lette you know my skill, my cunning, me vill gage a hundred pistol, dat dat fine ladeè, and her very pretty sister, are de French ladeè.

OLDWIT. [*Aside*] Ounds, this Count will make my damned affected toad so proud, the devil would not live with her. French and sister! With a pox!

LADY FANTAST. We have often bewailed the not having had the honor to be born French.

COUNT. Pardon me; is impossible!

MRS. FANTAST. *Mon foi, je parle vrai:* we are mere English *assurément.*

COUNT. "*Mon foi, je parle vrai!*" vat is dat gibberish? Oh, lette me see; de fader is de lawyere, an she learnè of him at de Temple; is de law French.—I am amazè! French lookè, French air, French mien, French movement of the bodee! *Morbleu!* Monsieur, I will gage 4500 pistol dat dese two sister vere bred in France, yes. *Teste bleu*, I can no be deceive.

MRS. FANTAST. *Je vous en prie*, do not; we never had the blessing to be in France; you do us too much honor. Alas, we are forced to be content with plain English breeding. You will bring all my blood into a blush. I had indeed a *penchen* always to French.

COUNT. *Penchen!* vat is dat? Oh, is law French?—You puttè de very great confusion upon me: I tought it was impossible to find dat mien, air, wit, and breeding out of France.

OLDWIT. French! why, my lord Count, this is my wife; this is her daughter.

COUNT. Daughtere! Dis young ladee havè de daughtere? Begar, you makè my head turn round, an mine hair stand up! Is impossible! Pardon me.

LADY FANTAST. My dear, sweet lord Count, you pose me now with your grand civilities. She is my daughter; I was married indeed exceeding young.

COUNT. Begar, madam, den you be de pretty modere, she de pretty daughtere, in de whole varle. Oh, mine 'art, mine 'art! dose eyes, dat air, ave killè me! I broughtè de 'art out of France, and I ave lost it in dis plas! Is gone, madam; an *morbleu!* you see now de French count vidout a heart.

TRIM. With what frigidity she looks on me, and with what warm transport she seems to pierce the Frenchman through! *Varium et mutabile semper femina.*[2]

Re-enter BELLAMY, WILDISH, *and* GERTRUDE

WILDISH. What would you give for such a servant?

GERTRUDE. Just as much as I would for you. I had not so much as pitched upon a country yet for my choice, but methinks France should be the last. I like not these apish counts; they're mere kickshaws.[3]

BELLAMY. You judge right, madam, of this count at least.

GERTRUDE. Indeed, he seems to me a very choice coxcomb.

COUNT. Oh, madam, you have de fine haire, de very fine haire! Dose tresses conquer de lovere. Cupid make his net of dat haire, to catchè de 'art: de couleur delicat, better den my peruke is great deal. Begar, if I had dat haire, I vould makè two, tree peruke of dat.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] Pox on you, you rascal! You are no barber, sir, you are a count.

COUNT. Havè de patiance: dat is, me could makè de peruke two, tree; buttè I voud makè de locket, de bracelet, and de pretty love-knack.

1 Q1 *Monsieurs.*

2 Woman, always shifting and changeable.—Vergil, *Æneid*, IV, 569.

3 fantastic persons.

They all cry their wares. Enter several Jack-Puddings,[1] *and give papers*

1ST PUDDING. A very good monster! a very pretty delicate monster: the like ne'er seen in England! The monster is just now beginning.

2D PUDDING. Pimper le pimp, the High-German juggler! Pray walk in and take your places; 'tis the last time of showing this morning.

COUNT. Vat is pimp? Vat, does he lettè a de whore at de Fair?

1ST PUDDING. A most delicious, dainty monster, the most delightful monster, the prettiest monster ever was seen! The most admirable, the most incomparable monster!

COUNT. Ha, ha, ha! Begar, I likè dis Jean Pudding ver well; I vill talkè vid him, begar. He makè me laugh dis morning; he almost killè me.

WILDISH. You rogue, remember you are a count, and no barber, puppy.

MRS. FANTAST. You see his wit and judgment! He finds out good breeding immediately.

GERTRUDE. Yes, he has found wit in a Jack-Pudding.

COUNT. *Morbleu*, madam, I have see de marionettè de Jean Pudding in France, dat have de great deal of *esprits*, and of de wit: de very pretty man, and de very good company; yes, indeed.

MRS. FANTAST. No doubt, sir, *assurément oui.*—Look you, Mrs. Gatty.

(SIR HUMPHREY *finds a country* Peasant *leaning upon his staff; he strikes it away, and he falls backward. Another* Peasant *knocks* SIR HUMPHREY *down: he rises, and draws. Several of the mobile join with the* Peasant. *The gentlemen draw and rescue him. The ladies shriek and run away*)

COUNT. Begar, dat be very merry gentilman; he have de great deal of wit, *assurément oui. Teste bleu*, de insolence of peasant English!

WILDISH. Death! let's in and rescue him.

BELLAMY. Sir Humphrey, you have suffered for your wit, I see.

OLDWIT. Only a head broken, that's all. The inside of your head will often endanger the outside, Sir Humphrey.

SIR HUMPHREY. Pish, this is nothing. Pox on't, an accident—a mere accident. Gad take me, I'll have my jest, let what will come on't.

COUNT. Insolent peasant! Begar, me vill killè two, trec tousand peasant. Strikè de gentilman! Sire, *morbleu*, me vill helpe you to killè de damn peasant.

OLDWIT. Come, come to my house; my daughter's woman shall lay you on a plaster.

COUNT. I voud be glad to putte my cutto[2] into de body of de peasant; dey have fright de lady.

BELLAMY. But, Monsieur le Count, our peasants have quarter-staves, and if gentlemen go to run them through they will knock 'em down; and we commend 'em for't.

COUNT. De peasant! begar, de peasant be de slave, de dog, *morbleu!*

BELLAMY. Our peasants wear shoes and stockings, and lie warm, and have good meat and drink in their houses.

WILDISH. Your king is a king of dogs then; but how much greater is ours, who is a king of men—and free men! Ours governs the willing, he the unwilling.

COUNT. Your king great as our king! Jerny, your king can do noting; dere is de law, de Parliament, I don know vat, begar. My king can send for my head wen he pleas; yes, indeed, hum.

OLDWIT. My lord Count, 'tis almost dinner-time.

WILDISH. The rogue talks as if he were of the blood royal.

BELLAMY. Yes, like the next successor.

COUNT. Yes, begar, he can send for my head: and dat be very good for him.

WILDISH. But my king cannot send for my head when he please.

COUNT. *Morbleu*, dat be very good for you; yes, indeed. *Exeunt*

1 buffoons.

2 French, *couteau*, "knife."

ACT III

SCENE I. [*A room in* OLDWIT'S *house*]

[*Enter*] OLDWIT, LORD BELLAMY, WILDISH, SIR HUMPHREY, Count *and* TRIM

OLDWIT. Come, my lord Count, my Lord Bellamy, and gentlemen, may "good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both," as Macbeth[1] says. Ah, I love those old wits.

WILDISH. You are a wit in your heart.

OLDWIT. Aye, faith, so I am; and I love to be merry at meals. Ah, wit is as necessary as good wine at table.

SIR HUMPHREY. Aye, faith, so 'tis. I summon up all my wit at dinner.

OLDWIT. My lords and gentlemen, we'll into my smoking-room, and sport about a brimmer; and wit shall fly about like hail-shot. Oh, the wit that I have heard in that room!

BELLAMY. We will wait on you soon, but I have promised the ladies an entertainment with a little concert of music by my own servants, who are ready now. And I desire you will call the ladies, sir.

OLDWIT. If your lordship please, but, faith, we had better be a-toping. [*Exit*]

SIR HUMPHREY. Did you ever hear the Thetford music?

BELLAMY. Not I, sir.

SIR HUMPHREY. 'Sbud, they are the best music in England. There's the best shawm[2] and bandore,[3] and a fellow that acts Tom of Bet'lem to a miracle! And they sing "Charon, oh, gentle Charon" and "Come, my Daphne" better than Singleton and Clayton did.

WILDISH. Here's the pleasure of country conversation, Bellamy! Had not a man better be condemned to the galleys than endure it?

BELLAMY. I am of your opinion, Ned, and for that reason never have such company at my house. If I have, 'tis but for once; for country gentlemen, unless you repay their visit, are too proud to see you twice, and I never visit any but such as I like very well.

(SIR HUMPHREY *dumbfounds the* Count *with a smart rap on the shoulders*)

COUNT. *Morbleu*, vat is dat? Monsieur Wildish, did you hittè me?

WILDISH. Not I, monsieur.

COUNT. Nor you, my lor?

BELLAMY. Not I, Monsieur le Count.

(SIR HUMPHREY *raps him again*)

COUNT. *Ventre bleu!* Is dere again! Sire, vat you mean by dat, to strike me between de head and de shouldere?

TRIM. My lord, if your honor had given yourself the leisure circumspectly to have made inquisition into any part of the history of my life and breeding, or into the sedate composure and serenity of my mind, you might easily have collected that I am a person that either never exercised myself in such juvenile and jocular diversions, or, at least, have totally abandoned them.

COUNT. Begar, dis be de very great fop; *Teste bleu*, I no understanda him. (SIR HUMPHREY *raps him again*) Agen? is de diable. Ah, *ma foi*, is dat merry gentilman. Ha, ha, is very good jest indeed; but, begar, you hittè me too hard, indeed!

SIR HUMPHREY. Nothing, nothing at all, my lord Count, among friends. I can't forbear my jest, i'faith. Let's kiss and be better acquainted.

COUNT. Vid all mine heart. (*Kiss*) Ha! who shave your face? Lette me see: he leavè two, tree, four great stumpe dat pricke my countenance. Oh, fie! dese barbiers English can do noting. If I would takè de trade (*Snaps his fingers*), begar, I would starve dem all. (*Snaps his fingers again*)

WILDISH. Sirrah rogue, remember you are a count still.

COUNT. Is all one: I sometime take delight to shave de noblesse of France for my plaisir.

Enter CHARLES *with the music*, OLDWIT, *and* LADY [FANTAST], MRS. FANTAST, GERTRUDE, Women, *and* Chambermaids

OLDWIT. Now, my lord, let the music strike up; here are the women. I long to be at brimmers.

[1] III, iv, 38–39.
[2] A double-reed wind instrument.
[3] A guitar with three strings.

SIR HUMPHREY. Now for a fit of mirth.

BELLAMY. Come, Charles, begin.

(*They sing an Italian song of two parts*)
You must excuse it; 'tis country music, madam.

GERTRUDE. 'Tis admirable! the Court has no better.

LADY FANTAST. You must be putting in with your ill breeding! If any traveller should affirm that Italy afforded better, I should humbly demand his pardon.

MRS. FANTAST. I am swallowed up in admiration! *je suis astonné!*[1] I am only in doubt whether the harmonious composition or the elegant performance be most *charmant.*

COUNT. Dat is admirable *bien dict,* madam!

OLDWIT. I had a daughter that sung—But, no more of her.

CHARLES. [*Aside*] What do I hear? I'll haste away. Farewell! *Exit* CHARLES

GERTRUDE. I never heard a voice and manner so like my poor sister's. I thought he had some resemblance of her, but that he's of another complexion. But he was so bashful he would not show his face.

SIR HUMPHREY. My lord, can they sing "Lilly Burlero," or have they e'er a merry song?

BELLAMY. My servants are no fiddlers.

OLDWIT. Come, come, my lords and gentlemen, into my smoking-room. Women, go pack into the drawing-room and play at toe-gleek[2] or ombre[2]; go!

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, madam, get the French count with us, or I am ruined. Oh, he is the finest personage and most agreeable!

LADY FANTAST. Good Mr. Oldwit, you will betray your ill breeding. Entertain one of the French noblesse with smoking and sotting! He shall go with us. You show your wit, and not a word of French among you!

OLDWIT. 'Sdeath, my wit! Dare you profane my wit? Thou old, ill-bred, silly creature, I'll teach thee better breeding and make thee submit to thy lord and master.

COUNT. Sir, I beg pardon; I am for de ladee; I no drink, I no smoke. Come, madam, vee vill play at de *petites jeux,*[3] or someting or oder. Begar, de smoke spoil my orangery and pulvilio.

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, I love *de petites jeux extrêmement.*

TRIM. I am also for the ladies, to whom I have ever sacrificed all my devoir.[4] Madam, I kiss your hands.

MRS. FANTAST. Pish!—But as I was saying, monsieur—

TRIM. Ha! must I be sacrificed to that kickshaw of a Frenchman? It shall not be long ere he receive a cartel[5] from me.

SIR HUMPHREY. Mr. Oldwit is so importunate that I cannot leave him yet, i'faith, but I'll steal away and pay my duty to you.

MRS. FANTAST. No, no, Sir Humphrey, no matter. The Count is an accomplished gentleman.—Monsieur, you were speaking—

SIR HUMPHREY. Say you so? Ud'sbud! the Count my rival! I will take an occasion to kick that damned count most exceedingly.

OLDWIT. Daughter, meet me half an hour hence without fail in the great dining-room above.

GERTRUDE. I will, sir.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] Pray, let it be within a quarter of an hour, for most important reasons I will give you there.

OLDWIT. I have contrived an opportunity for your lordship to be private with your mistress, my lord.

BELLAMY. You infinitely oblige me, sir.

OLDWIT. Come, now let's all into my smoking-room. Go, womankind, pack away to your cards and your tea.

Exeunt Count *and* Ladies

TRIM. Mr. Oldwit, I humbly take my leave to withdraw with the ladies.

OLDWIT. No, 'faith, shall you not. Sir Humphrey, take him by one arm, and I'll take him by the other.

TRIM. Gentlemen, gentlemen, commit not a rape upon me, I beseech you; I drink not between meals. Did you know how averse

1 Equals *je m'étonne.* 2 An old card game. 3 forfeits. 4 respect. 5 challenge.

I am—Sir, sir, I would not be intoxicated for the universe! Sir, sir!

OLDWIT. Come, my lord, and Mr. Wildish.

(TRIM *talks all the while they hale him*)

BELLAMY
WILDISH } We wait on you.

BELLAMY. What are we condemned to?

[*Exeunt*]

[SCENE II. *The smoking-room*]

Enter OLDWIT, LORD BELLAMY, WILDISH, SIR HUMPHREY, *and* TRIM

OLDWIT. Here, where is this damned butler? Bring the monteith and bottles. Well, Mr. Wildish, you are one of the top London wits.

WILDISH. Not guilty, upon my honor.

OLDWIT. No matter for that. But did you ever hear more wit fly about a dinner at London? Such broadsides and such merriment, my lord?

WILDISH. Yes, indeed, a great deal of wit did fly about the room.

SIR HUMPHREY. Sir, your humble servant. When my lady asked me for a piece of rabbit you remember I told her it was a rawbit, for 'twas not roasted—ha, ha, ha!

TRIM. That was a good jest, indeed.

SIR HUMPHREY. She asked me if I would have any custard; I told her I was not such a fool to refuse it.

OLDWIT. And when she asked me, Will you have any woodcock, husband? I answered, No; I will have some goose, wife. She thought to have put the woodcock upon me, and I put the goose upon her, i'faith.

SIR HUMPHREY. Ha, ha! Very excellent!

(OLDWIT[1] *and he laugh*)

TRIM. These gentlemen, Mr. Wildish, are witty. I must confess, they want not salt, and are indeed very jocose; but I would gladly hear something from yourself, and my lord's honor, that savors more of solidity than what they hitherto have produced.

WILDISH. Are you always thus witty, Sir Humphrey?

SIR HUMPHREY. Oh, aye. The judges, when they come the circuit, certainly send for me. They love my company.

BELLAMY. Do judges love this way of wit?

SIR HUMPHREY. Ever, while you live; and your sergeants and doctors of divinity. The last time I dined in such company I told a story of a doctor of divinity whose wife used to entertain him with three dishes every day: bitter, pout, and tart. There was such a laughing, they roared out again. The ladies tyhee'd under their napkins; I am the son of a whore, if the tyhee did not take a reverend old gentlewoman as she was a drinking, and she squirted the beer out of her nose, as an Indian does tobacco. Ha, ha, ha!

OLDWIT. Prithee, dear Sir Humphrey, forbear; I am not able to bear it. I have laughed myself sore. Mr. Trim, what ails you? you are melancholy.

TRIM. I must confess Sir Humphrey is a man of neat, concise parts, and exceeding jocular, but my way is to affect being more grave and solid.

OLDWIT. Grave and solid! Come, come, you want a bottle. Why, sirrah, butler! come quickly. You shall have a whisking bumper.

TRIM. Sir, I protest against bumpers. I would not drink a bumper for the universe.

Enter Butler, *placing glasses and bottles*

OLDWIT. Rascal, make haste, you lazy elephant: and, d'ye hear, bring me my horn I use to drench the restive drinkers with. I'll make you take your dose.

TRIM. That men should cloud the faculties of their noble souls, and put their minds, as 'twere, into a mist!

WILDISH. Why, you can make a joke, Sir Humphrey, upon anything.

SIR HUMPHREY. I seldom fail, thank God.

WILDISH. Let's hear now, upon the wainscot.

SIR HUMPHREY. Pshaw, waw! 'tis weak wainscot.

BELLAMY. How so? 'tis good Danish oak.

SIR HUMPHREY. Ha, ha, ha! you know, the weakest goes to the wall: the wainscot

[1] Q1 *The Count.*

goes to the wall; *ergo*, weak wainscot. Ha, ha!

OLDWIT. Ha, ha, ha! passing good!

SIR HUMPHREY. I am ready again: reprieving wainscot.

WILDISH. How so? The devil can't find that out.

SIR HUMPHREY. Ha, ha, ha! why, wainscot saves many a hanging.

OLDWIT. Ha, ha! Admirable! for if I had not wainscoted my rooms, I must have had hangings. He'll kill me sometime or other.

BELLAMY. Upon the window.

SIR HUMPHREY. Why, 'tis a damned mutinous window; for 'tis full of quarrels: you shall never take me at a why not.

WILDISH. Upon the looking-glass.

SIR HUMPHREY. Why, 'tis an ill-natured looking-glass.

WILDISH. How so?

SIR HUMPHREY. Because it makes reflections, ha, ha!

WILDISH. Upon the day.

SIR HUMPHREY. Upon the day? Ha, hum; why, 'tis a scabby day.

WILDISH. A scabby day?

SIR HUMPHREY. Aye, because the sun's broken out.

OLDWIT. For the love of Heaven, dear friend, not so fast: I cannot suffer it. Come, sirrah, a bumper.

Enter Footman

FOOTMAN. Sir, there are four gentlemen come to wait on you.

OLDWIT. Who? Butler, remove the things into my parlor: this room's too little. Come, gentlemen; I beseech you, secure the prisoner. (*They lay hold on* [TRIM])

TRIM. Sir, you have company enough; I beseech you, sir. Sir, I disclaim drink between meals. *Exeunt*

[SCENE III. OLDWIT'S *dining-room*]

Enter GERTRUDE

GERTRUDE. Wildish is not here yet; I am come somewhat before my time, to fly from the horrible impertinence in the drawing-room. I'll lay my life this French count is some idle scoundrel, and an impostor.

Enter WILDISH

WILDISH. Madam, your most humble servant: you have not stayed long, I hope.

GERTRUDE. Not at all for you, I assure you, sir; my father appointed me—

WILDISH. Not this quarter hour yet, by my watch.

GERTRUDE. It wants nothing by mine. But you sparks have such vanity, that you are ready to turn everything to your own advantage. Can you believe I come to meet you here?

WILDISH. Is it not fitter for your youth and beauty to meet an honest young fellow who is in love with you to madness, than an old fellow with musty sayings, old proverbs, and wise counsels?

GERTRUDE. Don't abuse my father behind his back. He wise? No wiser than yourself. He is a Bury wit, as you are a London one.

WILDISH. I a wit, madam? You are resolved to use your sovereign power over me, and I'll show you my passive obedience. Do you swagger like a tyrant, you shall find I can bear like a slave.

GERTRUDE. Yes, you can act a slave for a time in hopes of making me one ever after.

WILDISH. Ah, madam, those eyes were made to conquer, and preserve their conquests: where'er they come, they'll govern always.

GERTRUDE. For all that, if I were married to you (which Heaven avert) you would, within three months, be apt to think my maid's eyes, though a dowdy, more victorious.

WILDISH. It is impossible; I could as soon prefer a farthing candle to the sun.

GERTRUDE. Nay, I shall never try.

WILDISH. I am resolved, I'll never leave you: I will wait upon your person, or watch about your house continually.

GERTRUDE. But I'll command you from me; I'll try my dominion.

WILDISH. In whatever I can, I will obey you, but you may as well command your shadow from you in the sunshine.

GERTRUDE. I'll call in aid, to remove you farther.

WILDISH. Not bombs or cannons can do that. While you are awake, I'll ne'er be from you; and when you sleep, I'll watch, and sigh, and sing my plaints about your house.

GERTRUDE. Sure you dare not be thus bold!

WILDISH. By Heav'n, I cannot help it. And look to it; for this in Bury (as all little towns are full of tattling and censure) will bring scandal to you, at least, if it does not produce love in you.

GERTRUDE. For love, I am sure it shall not: and for scandal, I'll remove.

WILDISH. Wherever you go, you have fast hold on my heart-strings, and will tug me along with you.

GERTRUDE. If I have, I'll tug you, I'll warrant you, till I crack them. These are flams. I'll to London; there I shall be lost to you, like a hare in a hare-warren, and you shall yelp no more after me.

WILDISH. You are so fair, so bright, above all others, that I shall follow you by your track of light and never miss you.

GERTRUDE. Are there any lovers thus impudent, to think to procure love by troubling one?

WILDISH. Is it impudence to own your power and my weakness? In short, madam, I am resolved to haunt you worse than any beau, and pelt you with billets-doux some fifteen times a day.

GERTRUDE. What, like one of those odious creatures, will you dress at me? and tie cravats at me? and strut like a turkey-cock, and prune yourself?

WILDISH. Even so; and stare, and goggle at you, and never have my eyes off you, while I side-box you in the playhouse.

GERTRUDE. What, where the beaux draw up three ranks deep every day?

WILDISH. Yes.

GERTRUDE. Well, and I'll never cast my eyes upon you for a whole play together.

WILDISH. That will be over-acted, and cunning intriguers will censure you from that.

GERTRUDE. Very fine! But I assure you, if you join with the beaux, you shall never be looked upon by me, for there is not upon earth a more odious sight than those boxes full of ugly beaux. I observe, the beaux now are the ugliest hatchet-faced fellows about town.

WILDISH. Fellows of five-and-fifty, with grizzly beards, set up for beaux: and among these will I herd, when you are at a play, that I may ogle you, fair.

GERTRUDE. Then will I leave the play.

WILDISH. So will I.

GERTRUDE. And to the Park.

WILDISH. So will I, where I will side-glass you, turn when you turn—

GERTRUDE. Then will I leave the Park.

WILDISH. So will I, and follow you to the Mall.

GERTRUDE. You will not dare, sure?

WILDISH. Yes I will; and strut up to you, with a slur[1] and a coupee,[2] sing a silly new song or two softly in your ear, and put on an air of gaiety, as if I had succeeded.

GERTRUDE. I'll soon shake you off and go to the drawing-room.

WILDISH. No sooner there, but I am with you; and 'tis as good a scene of ogling as any.

GERTRUDE. Sure, I shall cast you off when I go to church.

WILDISH. The beaux are the most constant churchmen. You shall see troops of 'em perked up in galleries, setting their cravats. There you shall be sure to find me, and I will stare you out of your prayers. In short, my dear, sweet, pretty madcap, I am resolved never to give thee over while I have breath.

GERTRUDE. This is most amazing! Art not thou a very impudent fellow, to talk thus? Do you call this making love! Why, this is making war—worse than blockades and sieges, which they write of in gazettes.

WILDISH. It is a gentle siege, but I will never raise it. I may fall dead before your fort.

1 A glide.
2 A dancing step of salutation.

GERTRUDE. And that you shall, before you take it. [*Aside*] What a dissembling jade am I now!

WILDISH. Then will I haunt you at noon, at dead of night—

GERTRUDE. You will come a faithful humble bee, and hum, and buzz, as the *Rehearsal* says. (*A noise of one coming up stairs*) Here comes somebody! I'll not have the scandal upon me of being taken alone with you. *Exit* [GERTRUDE]

Enter LORD BELLAMY

WILDISH. Oh, my lord, I have had the advantage of you, in stealing from your confounded company before you.

BELLAMY. You have so; but there's great inquiry made after you.

WILDISH. We were bad enough with our punning fools, but that new detachment of drunkards and visitants made 'em completely the most confounded company I ever was condemned to. Here are the fruits of the country! Prithee, my dear peer, fling off this melancholy thought of retirement, and let us enjoy thee again in London: let me not lose my dearest friend for a fit of the spleen or two.

BELLAMY. Dear Ned, if anything could tempt me to that noisy town, thou, and some choice friends whose conversation I extremely value, might do it. But I am weary of it, and dote upon my quiet retirement.

WILDISH. Man is not self-sufficient; he was made a sociable animal, and must have conversation.

BELLAMY. And that, by a man of a good estate as you and I have, may be had in the country.

WILDISH. Merry meetings may be had, but not so frequently as your sessions. And when you think you have a choice company, in rushes some loud obstreperous hunter, hawker, or jockey, good for nothing else, and roars about dogs, kites, and horses, and spoils that meeting. To keep open house and entertain the neighboring coxcombs, is worse than being host of an inn. And to meet company elsewhere, is to be poisoned with damned wine.

BELLAMY. I take care to meet none but good company; and wherever we meet, we take a course to have as good wine from London as any there. And at my own house, I will entertain none but good company.

WILDISH. Then the country gentlemen, who are most of 'em ill company, will hate you, and you will have no interest.

BELLAMY. He that esteems himself by another man's opinion is an ass. My tenants I make much of.

WILDISH. But what can be the diversion of a country life? A man must be waked at three in a morning, by the cracked voices of huntsmen, with damned bugle-horns, and the confounded yelps of curs; and for want of friendship with men, divert themselves with their enmity to beasts; and hunt, as if the devil were in 'em, till at dark night they are scarce able to dismount their horses.

BELLAMY. They are fops, Ned, that make a business of sport. I hunt with my harriers half a dozen heats in a morning, for health and an appetite, and, at dinner time, let 'em be in never such full cry, I knock off.

WILDISH. There is some reason in that; but your true country squire lives in boots all the winter, never talks or thinks of anything but "sports," as he calls 'em, and if an ill day comes, saunters about his house, lolls upon couches, sighs and groans, as if he were a prisoner in the Fleet, and the best thing he can find to do is to smoke, and drink, and play at backgammon with the parson.

BELLAMY. These are of the strictest order of hunters, such as keep journals of every day's hunting and write long letters of fox-chases from one end of England to the other. Tho' these are fops, Ned, a reasonable man may enjoy himself very well in the country.

WILDISH. How so?

BELLAMY. I have a noble house, an air pure and uncorrupted.

WILDISH. Which are to be had in St. James's Square and Hyde Park.

BELLAMY. I view my stately fields and meads, laden with corn and grass; my herds of kine and flocks of sheep; my breed of horses; my delicate gardens full of all sorts of fruits and herbs; my river full of fish, with ponds, and a decoy for water-fowl, and plenty of game of all kinds in my fields and woods; my parks for venison; my cellar well furnished with all variety of excellent drinks —and all my own, Ned.

WILDISH. All these things have we at London. The product of the best cornfields at Queenhithe; hay, straw, and cattle at Smithfield—with horses too. Where is such a garden in Europe as the Stocks Market? Where such a river as the Thames? Such ponds and decoys as in Leadenhall Market, for your fish and fowl? Such game as at the poulterers? And instead of parks, every cook's shop for venison, without hunting, and venturing neck or arms for it. And for cellars, from Temple Bar to Aldgate—and all that I have use of—my own too—since I have money.

BELLAMY. But I have pleasure in reading the *Georgics*, and contemplating the works of nature.

WILDISH. I contemplate the chief works of nature—fine women—and the juice of the grape, well concocted by the sun.

BELLAMY. Your fine women are a company of proud, vain fops and jilts, abominably daubed and painted, and I had rather kiss a blackamoor, with a natural complexion, than any such. And besides, many of them are so unsound that making love is become as dangerous as making war; and the wounds and scars are dishonorable to boot. Then, for your wine, 'tis attended with such surfeits, qualms, headaches, late hours, quarrels and uproars, that every scene of drunkenness is a very Bedlam.

WILDISH. Poor Bellamy! thou wert never happy since thou left'st off those noble maxims; *Beati non numerant horas.* Measure not your time by hour-glasses, but by wine-glasses. Oh, the sweet of a brimmer at midnight! The night was made for beasts to sleep in, and for man to watch in.

BELLAMY. And if I have no other misfortune but the headache and puking in the morning, to hear of this friend breaking a collar-bone with a fall, that having his skull cracked by the watch, another run through the lungs by drunken bullies—and all this to treasure up diseases if you should arrive to a miserable age!

WILDISH. Who would not be sick ten days for one good night with men of wit and sense?

BELLAMY. There's no true pleasure but in health.

WILDISH. What should a man do with health in damned country company, which a man ought either to be a very good philosopher, or none at all, to endure?

BELLAMY. What good does wit and sense do you? Do what you can, the fops will be at the top of pleasures. And the knaves will be at the head of all business in spite of you, and will bear down the world, that a man who has wit can be good for nothing.

WILDISH. That makes the business of the world so foolishly done.

Enter GERTRUDE *and* OLDWIT'S Footman

GERTRUDE. My father is not here.

FOOTMAN. He commanded me to bid you meet him in this room. (*She offers to retire*)

WILDISH. Whither goes my pretty tyrant? Tho' your father be not here, here is (I am sure) one humble servant of yours.

BELLAMY. That I am sure of, madam; who is resolved to lay himself at your feet, there humbly to receive his doom.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] What the devil does he say? Is my best friend my rival?—I hope, madam, you are not in doubt who that servant is I spoke of?

BELLAMY. [*Aside*] What's this? Are we rivals? This is the greatest misfortune that could have happened! Hold! perhaps it may be only his usual gallantry to all young women.—Would you could see the wounds you make in hearts; then, madam, mine would expect your pity.

GERTRUDE. This is a very pretty scene, runs smoothly off the tongue, and is very well acted. Can you do it over again?

Enter OLDWIT

OLDWIT. Oh, Mr. Wildish! I have been searching and sending for you all over the house. What? turned flincher! Faith, I must have you down with me.

WILDISH. Here's my lord's a flincher too.

OLDWIT. I wink at that: I can give you some reason for that as we go. Daughter, you know what I have said to you of this nobleman: I could not find out in all the nation such a match. Do you mind me?

GERTRUDE. Yes, sir. [*Aside*] But by your good favor, I'll find out one for myself, for all that.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] 'Tis evident! What damned misfortune could have fallen out like this?

OLDWIT. Come, faith, Mr. Wildish, you shan't 'scape so: brimmers fly about handsomely, and we are a rare company.

WILDISH. [*Aside*] I must not discover my love to this old fellow yet; I will knock him down, with two or three in a hand.

Exit with OLDWIT

GERTRUDE. [*Aside*] How I hate this kind of fooling! A woman never makes so silly a figure as when she is to look demurely and stand to be made love to.

BELLAMY. Madam, the several letters I have addressed to your ladyship's hands, and my good orator your father, tho' you never saw me, have let you know who I am—and then you'll guess what I have to say.

GERTRUDE. 'Tis true, my lord, I do guess, and therefore your lordship need not trouble yourself to say it; for all discourse about that affair runs to the same tune.

BELLAMY. I never loved before, nor can I believe that any man loves like me.

GERTRUDE. 'Tis all alike. "Madam, your beauties! your excellent accomplishments! your extraordinary merits! divine" and so forth! "The lustre of your eyes" and the rest. "The honor to kiss your fair hands!" and so forth. All this we have in romances, and love and honor plays. Trust me, my lord, 'tis tedious.

BELLAMY. Could I incline your gentle heart to love, then no discourse of it would seem so.

GERTRUDE. I can't tell that. But as things stand now, indeed it makes me smile, to think of a grave mother—or, for want of her, a wise father—putting a daughter into a room, like a hare out of a basket, and letting her loose; that is, to act the part of a lover before marriage, and never think of it afterward. Then is she either to frown, be peevish, or sullen, and make no answers, or very scurvy ones; or else to blush, hold down her head, tell the sticks and play with her fan, and say, "I have no thoughts of marriage; I am too young; 'tis time enough."

BELLAMY. But, madam, a lady of your wit and sense knows 'tis the great end that woman is designed for; and 'tis in vain for you to speak against love, for every look and every word of yours inflames me more.

GERTRUDE. There's a word now!—"inflames!"—and chains, and fetters. I warrant you, one would think a man were a martyr, or a slave at Algiers at least. What conversation might men and women have, did not this foolish love interpose!

BELLAMY. 'Tis impossible for a man to forbear thinking or talking of love in the presence of so beautiful, so excellent a lady.

GERTRUDE. I could expect no less: "Beautiful!—excellent!" How silly one looks who must stand to hear herself complimented! My lord, you are a man of honor, and I will speak plainly to you. I am resolved against love; therefore, pray deal frankly with me: disappoint the old gentleman, and let's not have one word of it betwixt us. My happiness or ruin depends upon your breath. I am too young and giddy to fix upon so solemn a business, and the pleasure I find in being free cannot be bought at any rate.

BELLAMY. Your father, madam, I hope may be a prevailing advocate.

GERTRUDE. Hope is a very thin diet, fit for love in a fever; but to tell you true, I am apt to believe there is no such thing as love. But, if there be, I can assure you, you have gone the wrong way; for my father is

no outwork of mine. You may take him, but you are ne'er the nearer me. I am a free heiress of England, where arbitrary power is at an end, and I am resolved to choose for myself. How happily am I relieved!

Enter Count *and* Mrs. Fantast

—Look you, my lord, here are a pair of turtles! The French count has gotten an absolute conquest. Let's retire, and hear the love betwixt them: they'll divert us upon that subject better than we can ourselves.

Bellamy. I must obey.

(*They retire and listen*)

Mrs. Fantast. Now, Monsieur le Count, we are free. We were embarrassed with company below, that we could not enjoy ourselves; and some so ill bred, that, eh Gud, they caused such a chagrin in me!

Count. I am very appy in de occasion of kisse your 'and, in secret. Indeed, de Bury ladies be ver fine, ver prettee, and do me de great *honneur*; buttè, madam, your lustre does outshinè dem, as de great sun does de leetel star dat twinkel, twinkel, in sky, madam.

Mrs. Fantast. Oh, monsieur, the *ébat*[1] of your wit will make anything appear well. I must confess I never have met such brilliant conversation as from your most agreeable person.

Count. [*Aside*] See bee de victorious ladeè; butte, begar, see speakè de dam French for all dat.

Mrs. Fantast. *En veritie*, you have charmed them all; but, *mon foi*, I hate the impertinence of a numerous *assemblée*.

Count. Oh, madam, dere is no plaisir in de varle, as de retirement vid so bright a nymp; and, madam, I must telle, dat now you have steale me out of the companee, you cannot but perceivè me, dat I have de ver great and signal passion for your ladiship; and I have but de few littel opportunitee to say, dat if you takè no compassion upon me, you breakè mine 'art; and I must killè myself vid de French bayonett if you makè de scorn of me.

Mrs. Fantast. I am not so ill bred to scorn one of the noblesse.

Gertrude. [*To* Bellamy] Pray, forbear, my lord; they will come to the point presently. Would you have us play the fool thus?

Count. If you have no scorn, de indifferance is fatal, and vill killè me too.

Mrs. Fantast. *Sincèrement*, monsieur, a lady cannot have indifference for a person so *bien fait*, and whose conversation is *ravissant*.

Gertrude. [*To* Bellamy] She comes on handsomely.

Count. Ah, madam! I kissè your sweet 'and, for dis great *honneur*; buttè, madam, if my ambition might aspire at your love, I vill be more appy ten tousand time den de great monarch,[2] madam.

Mrs. Fantast. You know very well what the poet says:—

Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.

Count. Ver well, madam; you be the most profound ladeè, and de great scholar.—[*Aside*] *Morbleu*, she will findè me out! Begar, I can no read.

Mrs. Fantast. No, no *assurément*; pretty well read in the classic authors, or so. Monsieur Scudery says very well, "L'amour est une grande chose."

Count. Hee bee ver pretty poet too.—[*Aside*] Begar, she vill puzzle me.

Mrs. Fantast. Poet, monsieur! he writ romances.

Count. Ah, madam, in France we callè de romance, "de poésie."

Bellamy. [*To* Gertrude] Oh, rogue! that's well come off.

Mrs. Fantast. And, as Monsieur Balzac says, "Songez un peu."[3]

Count. Dat Balzac write de ver good romance.

Mrs. Fantast. Indeed! I never heard that.

Count. *Je vous assure.*[4] (*Aside*) A pox on her reading!—But, madam, let de poet, de philosoph, say vat dey vill, begar I am so much in love vid your person, dat if you vill

1 sport; meant for *éclat*.

2 Louis XIV. 3 Think a bit. 4 I assure you.

no be in love vid my person, begar, I must killè myself in two, tree day.

MRS. FANTAST. Take time, sir, I beseech you; we must consider on this affair.

COUNT. Madam, I have no time to consider; de grand monarch, my *maître*, wantè me for a lieutenan-general, to makè de war again Holland and Flandre, to burnè de house, and to killè de man, voman, and shildè, as de great monarch does, for his glory. And I vill speakè one proud vord for myself; he has not one officer in his armee dat burnè, makè de ravagee, and killè de man, voman, and shildè, better den myself; no, indeed.

MRS. FANTAST. Eh, *mon Dieu!* that is *sanglant cruelle.*[1]

COUNT. Pardon mee, madam, is de discipline of war to puttè de village and de house in flamè, and vid de pistolet to shoot de voman, paph—in de eare—vid big bellees, and de oder vid de shildè in dere arm—paph paph, ver dum, ver dum, paph, paph—and to puttè de pike an alf pike into de littel suck shildè, and dey sprawl, sprawl, vid deir arm and deir leg, and make de ver pretty shight; and take de littel boy and de garle—soe high, soe high, soe high—and stickè, and stickè de rapier into de bodee, madam.

MRS. FANTAST. This is very bloody.

COUNT. Oh, no, madam! Dey bee de enemee; de great hero always burnè and killè de man, voman, and shildè, for deir glory.

MRS. FANTAST. If you heroes be so cruel, 'tis enough to fright a lady.

COUNT. Ah, madam, 'tis de enemee; buttè to de maitresse, de heros be jentle as de lamb.

GERTRUDE. [*To* BELLAMY] This rascal must be an impostor. I scarce believe he is a Frenchman; tho' I have seen many a French coxcomb, yet I never saw a French clown before.

BELLAMY. I will assure you, he is so. 'Tis Ned Wildish his frolic; and 'tis fit you know it before the business go too far. I'll tell you more.

[1] Lit. "bloody cruel."

GERTRUDE. Oh, the farther the better! I love mischief heartily.

MRS. FANTAST. [*To the* Count] If I should agree to your honorable proposal, I must love you presently.

COUNT. Ah, madam, 'tis for mine *honneur*; you sall go to my chateau, my great house—for I have several—vid de great royaltee.

Enter LADY FANTAST, *with several* Ladies *more*

LADY FANTAST. These ladies have entertained your and my lord Count's absence with some regret and chagrin suitable to the occasion.

1ST LADY. Ah, madam, did you design to ingross my lord Count?

2D LADY. That was foul play, indeed, madam. Well, he's a fine person!

LORD BELLAMY *and* GERTRUDE *appear*

MRS. FANTAST. [*To* LADY FANTAST] *Quelle me impertinance!* Why would you bring them, madam? I shall bè a great woman; he is captivated to the last degree; he has ten thousand pistoles a year, and great houses and castles.

GERTRUDE. (*Aside*)—In the air.

MRS. FANTAST. [*Seeing* GERTRUDE] Oh, fie; how her pitiful English lord looks, in presence of my French count.

1ST LADY. Pray, my lord, do my husband the honor to dine with him to-morrow.

2D LADY. If your lordship be not engaged, be pleased to honor my house at a collation this night.

3D LADY. My lord, your lordship shall do my husband a great honor, to take a repast with him.

4TH LADY. My lord Count—

MRS. FANTAST. They are all amorous of him; his eye is Cupid's quiver, and his beams the darts.

Enter WILDISH

WILDISH. So! Here's a very fair assembly!

MRS. FANTAST. He's *engageè* to-night, ladies.

COUNT. Ladeè all, you do me de ver great *honneur*. I vish I could divide myself, but I am *engageè* to wait upon this lady and her pretty moderè.—(*Aside*) I find she lovè mee, by dat lye she makè for me.

GERTRUDE. I like your frolic admirably, for all 'tis yours.

WILDISH. So well acquainted to tell secrets already!

BELLAMY. [*Aside*] They are very familiar; ha! 'tis most apparent.

COUNT. *Serviteur*, my lor; *serviteur*, Monsieur Wildish. De ladee make much of de French count: *ma foi*, you will see presentlee.

Enter TRIM

TRIM. I am not a little afflicted, that I have been constrained to borrow myself so long from your ladyship's most—

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, fie! you smell of tobacco to a great degree.

COUNT. Ah, madam! take my peruke, and smellè de pulvilio; here, madam.

(*He plucks his peruke off, and gives it; she smells to it*)

MRS. FANTAST. *Mon Dieu! Obligeant!* Here is breeding, to divest himself of his chiefest ornament, to gratify my sense! 'tis very fine! (*The four* Ladies *smell it*)

1ST LADY. 'Tis admirable, I swear!

2D LADY. Delicate, I vow!

3D AND 4TH LADIES. Very fine!

COUNT. Is de ver fine haire, ladee; I have a great deal of de best in England or France in my shop.

GERTRUDE. How? in your shop! Do you keep shop, monsieur? How do you sell it?

COUNT. [*Aside*] *Morbleu*, vat is dis? Begar, I will bitè my tongue.—Shop! shop! I no understand English. Shop! Vat you call de place de jentilman puttè his peruke? Oh—his cabinet, his closet!

MRS. FANTAST. Now you see, Madam Gertrude; would you have him understand English like one of us?—*Je vous remercie*;[1] there's your peruke again.

1 I thank you.

TRIM. [*To the* Count] Sir, be pleased to read that cartel, and give me such an answer.

Enter SIR HUMPHREY NODDY

SIR HUMPHREY. Gentlemen and ladies, I kiss all your hands.

COUNT. [*Aside*] Pox take de note; *ventre bleu*, I can no read; but, I believe, is a shallengè.

SIR HUMPHREY. Madam, udsbud, we have drunk your health in bumpers supernaculum.[2]

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, fie! stand off.

COUNT. Hold! de ladee no lovè de smell de tobac.

SIR HUMPHREY. Are you there, i'faith? I hate the sight of a French dog, and I will pluck him by the nose.

[*Tweaks the* Count's *nose*]

COUNT. (*Aside*) If I draw, dey will partè mee.—[*Draws his sword*] *Morbleu,* mine *honneur*! mine *honneur*!

[SIR HUMPHREY *draws*]

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, insolence! Save the Count, save the Count!

(BELLAMY *and* WILDISH *part them. The* Ladies *shriek and run to the corner of the stage.* OLDWIT *staggers amongst them drunk. The women run out shrieking; with them exeunt* TRIM, SIR HUMPHREY, [*and*] BELLAMY)

OLDWIT. (*Sings*)

There were three men came out of the west,
To make saltpetre strong, etc.

Where are my drunkards? Where are my drunkards? You flinchers! You sober sots! Where is my Jezebel, my cockatrice, my clogdogdo, as honest Tom Otter says. A senseless jade, with her wit and her breeding! She steals away my drunkards. Old spouse, mummy; thou that wrap'st thyself every night in cere-cloths!

(*The* Servants *come in and hold him*)

COUNT. Consider I did killè de Count and have de blood upon me. Vell, monsieur, you vill takè de care o' de business. (*Aside*) *Morbleu!* pox takè de note, me can no read,

2 to the last drop; shown by turning the rim of the glass on the thumbnail.

me can no fight; vat me can do vid de shallengè? 691

WILDISH. You have done rarely. Let me alone: I'll protect you! but let's fly the fury of this drunkard. *Exit with the* Count

OLDWIT. Where is my goad, my damned for better for worse? She has stolen my drunkards and my wits from me. Where are my drunkards? Rogues! Let me go to my drunkards and my wits, you rogues. [*Sings*]

There were three men came out of the west,
To make saltpetre strong; 701
To turn it into gunpowder,
For to charge the king's cannon.

(*The* Servants *hale him out*)

ACT IV

SCENE I. [A *room in* OLDWIT'S *house*]

[*Enter*] WILDISH *and* TRIM

WILDISH. I am the Count's friend, but he will not engage me. He says he always kills, for he never gives quarter, and he will not be the occasion of my leaving my country. He must into France; he is a great officer. He has laid horses, and will be ready to escape. 7

TRIM. Is he so inveterate an enemy?

WILDISH. Yes, and fences like a provost.[1] He throws in his passes quick as lightning, and hits what button he pleases. 11

TRIM. Then, if I reap the honor of the field, my laurel will be greater. At the east end of the biggest church, you say, a quarter of an hour hence? I will not fail. I kiss your hands, sir. However the unfortunate arrival of this count, who has prodigiously insinuated himself into my mistress's affections, may have ruffled and disordered the wonted serenity of my temper, yet in all occasions that may occur, I assure you, sir, you shall ever find me rational and civil. Your humble servant. The time fleets quick away, and honor calls. *Exit* 24

WILDISH. This formal coxcomb, I find, is stout, and the Count will find some trouble in him. But 'twill advance the farce to have the ladies, who are stark mad after him, see or hear he's soundly cudgelled. 29

Enter SIR HUMPHREY

Sir Humphrey, if you make not haste, the Count will be before you; he'll wait alone, at the east end of the great church. 32

SIR HUMPHREY. A pox on him! Does he fence so devilishly, and never give quarter? Bloody rogue! But what care I? I make no more account of this count than of a jack-anapes. 37

WILDISH. Never without a conceit!

SIR HUMPHREY. Take me without a jest! But I'll be gone and make the French count dance a minuet.—Your servant. *Exit* 41

Enter Valet.

WILDISH. This fellow may be a coward, by his vaporing. Have you found the Count?

VALET. Yes, sir; very melancholy at your lodging, where he has told me the secrets of his heart. He bewailed this unlucky quarrel, which he apprehends so much that, were he not sure, as he says, of the love of Mrs. Fantast, he would leave his countship and run from Bury immediately. But he is now coming hither. 51

WILDISH. Well, go about your business, and say nothing yet. *Exit* Valet

Enter Count

COUNT. Vell, monsieur, vat is become of dis business with Monsieur Jean Trim? 55

WILDISH. I told him I was your friend, and I have appointed him a place to meet you in.

COUNT. Begar, I vill no meet. 59

WILDISH. I have passed my honor you shall be there.

COUNT. *Morbleu*, I vill no be dere. Jerny, I vill tellè you de secret. Dis fine ladee, Maitres Fantast, is in lovè vid me. *Ventre bleu*, I vill no fight! If I do, I am de ver great fool indeed to losè de great fortune; for if dis dam rogue runnè me trough de bodee, me losè de Maitres. 68

[1] Aid to a fencing-master.

WILDISH. How, you rogue? Lose her! You shall never have her. As great an aversion as I have to her, the frolic shall not go so far.

COUNT. (*Aside*) *Ma foi*, you be mistakè; de frolic shall go more far—yes, indeed.—I villa no killè de rogue, or be hanga for de rascal.

WILDISH. Don't trouble yourself. I have given him that character of you that he trembles at you; he'll never dare come. But we must be there, for our honor's sake.

COUNT. (*Aside*) Is de coward, indeed!—Eh, *morbleu*, monsieur, me fear no person dat vear de head; but in dis case is no prudance.

WILDISH. I have met Sir Humphrey, and I have challenged him to fight with you for the tweak he gave you by the nose; and told him I would be your second.

COUNT. Jerny, vat is dis? Begar, I vill no killè two. I vill no meet dat dam rogue, *ma foi.*

WILDISH. I have appointed him; you must be there. I believe he is a poltroon[1]; but you will be cudgelled by all the men, and scorned by all the women, if you take the tweak by the nose. Come along with me; I'll tell you more.

COUNT. Is better to takè de cudgel upon de shouldre two, tree, four time, den to have de rapier trough de bodee one time: yes, a great deal better.

WILDISH. Allons; here's company coming.

Exeunt WILDISH *and* Count

Enter CHARLES

CHARLES. There goes the rival to my lord. Oh, may he prosper in his suit, and cure my lord of his short fever! I am sure he can never be so mean to love one who shall love another. But here he comes.

Enter LORD BELLAMY

BELLAMY. Not all the ill-fortune I have ever met can equal this—that he whom I have loved so long, so true a friend, so much a man of honor, should be my rival! I cannot blame him for it neither; he has broken no trust, and any man that looks upon her must be subdued, as I am. But my hope is yet, she is unapt to love.—Oh, Charles, didst thou see Ned Wildish this evening?

CHARLES. Yes, my lord; even now he went into the Abbey yard.

BELLAMY. But what says my mistress to the present and the letter which I sent?

CHARLES. She was not at home. Here is your golden box full of jewels. It is the finest present I ever saw made to a lady. My lord, I beseech your lordship, let one of your gentlemen carry 'em.

BELLAMY. Is my service then become irksome to you?

CHARLES. Oh no, my lord. Pray frown not; I'll plunge into the deep, I'll run into the fire, to do you service. Pray, be not angry.

BELLAMY. I cannot tell what 'tis should move thee to it, but thou art still averse to the proceeding of my love.

CHARLES. I love you more than ever servant loved a lord, and 'tis my fear for you. My cousin in Northamptonshire is of kin to her, your lordship knows, and I once heard her say, she had too great a spirit for a wife.

BELLAMY. She has all the beauty and wit of her whole sex in her, and none of all their vanities. Didst thou not observe?

CHARLES. I did, my lord, that which your lordship did not.

BELLAMY. Ha! What was that?

CHARLES. My lord, I fear I shall offend.

BELLAMY. Yes, if you tell me not.

CHARLES. Did you not perceive she made a difference in her looks, and entertained not every man with equal sweetness?

BELLAMY. (*Aside*) He stings me to the heart!—Explain your meaning.

CHARLES. I may mistake, but yet, methinks, there is one gentleman whom she beholds with greater favor than what seems indifferent.

BELLAMY. It is her gaiety of temper; you are too jealous.

[1] *poultron.*

CHARLES. It is for you, my lord: pray, pardon me. Alas! what interest can I have but yours? I should be loath to be officious.

BELLAMY. What means the youth? Sure, young as he is, he is in love with her, and love will nourish even the highest ambition; for why should he be so concerned? Where is the letter which I ordered you to give my mistress with the present?

CHARLES. It is here, my lord. (*Gives him a note*) Sure, this will convince him.

BELLAMY. Ha! What do I see? 'Tis Wildish's hand! "To the fair hands of——" How came you by this note?

CHARLES. My lord, the note? Ha! 'Twas my mistake. I did, at the beginning of my discourse, intend to show it to your lordship, but found you would be too much moved. It dropped from Mrs. Gertrude after dinner, and I took it up.

BELLAMY. Why did you not restore it?

CHARLES. I, knowing the hand, thought I might do your lordship service in showing it to you. Will you not read it?

BELLAMY. Did you?

CHARLES. Oh yes, my lord, knowing your lordship was so highly concerned; and found it so familiar—

BELLAMY. It was impertinent.

CHARLES. My lord!

BELLAMY. It was not honest.

CHARLES. [*Kneeling*] My lord, my noble lord, pray pardon my misguided zeal for you! Impute it to my youth, my small experience, my mistake of honor. Forgive me, or my knees shall grow to the earth.

BELLAMY. Rise and learn better; to open others' letters is mean and dishonorable.

CHARLES. How glad am I to have instruction from you! You are a man of strictest honor! How shall I expiate my fault and gain your pardon?

BELLAMY. I pardon you, and will impute it to your want of knowledge; and to make atonement for it, you shall return it to her and make her what excuse you can. Go instantly and find her, and give me the present with my letter. *Exit*

CHARLES. Into how sad and how perplexed a case has my too headstrong passion brought me, which every day increases while my hopes grow less! What prospect have I now, or glimpse of comfort? She in a little time must love as I do. What shall I say to her? She will discover me. She said, she never saw one yet so like her sister but for the color of my hair; I overheard her. What shall I do? Hold. If this jealousy should make him fight with Wildish, I am lost! I'll follow him, for sure I shall be valiant in his cause. Oh, wicked rashness! *Exit*

[SCENE II. *The Abbey yard*]

[*Enter* WILDISH *and the* Count]

WILDISH. 'Tis a fine moonlight night; these fellows are poltroons, and dare not come.

COUNT. 'Tis de grand pity dat de coward should be suffer to live, indeed; me vould hang de coward. Begar, is time to go.

WILDISH. We must stay a little. If they come, I'll run Sir Humphrey through the lungs, while you whip the other through.

COUNT. Jerny! Vat, stay for de coward? Begar, I scorn to stay for de coward! Ver well indeed, de man of courage stay for de coward! Is no raison for dat.

WILDISH. I see two coming towards us; they are them two.

Enter BELLAMY *and* CHARLES

COUNT. Pox takè him, he does lovè de tilt: *ma foi*, is all one for dat! Begar, I vill no meet dem! Dey have affrontè me, to make me vait so long time; and I vill puttè de affronte upon dem, an leavè dem now dey be come. (*Walks hastily away*)

WILDISH. Monsieur le Count, come back. What, will you leave me to two?

COUNT. Hum, hum, hum; me vill no come back.

(WILDISH *overtakes him and lays hold on him*)

BELLAMY. Mr. Wildish.

WILDISH. My lord.

COUNT. Oh, begar, is my lor; de coward vill no come.

BELLAMY. I have somewhat to say to you which concerns me nearly.

WILDISH. My lord, I lately have perceived something of you that lies heavy at my heart.

BELLAMY. I never yet met with misfortune which could equal this.

WILDISH. I know too well your meaning. I never yet had any cross which I with ease could not have borne before.

BELLAMY. We have been friends.

WILDISH. Long friends, and true.

BELLAMY. I think so.

WILDISH. How, my lord! Do you but think so?

BELLAMY. I never till this day had the least doubt. What pleasant conversation, what endearments, what mutual kindnesses, have passed betwixt us!

WILDISH. And are you weary of my friendship, that you resolve to break with me by doubting it? How have I loved you present! With what regret have I sustained your absence! How often have we ventured our lives for one another's honor! And am I changed, my lord?

BELLAMY. Oh yes, friend, we are both changed; I have a mistress now, so charming it is impossible that I should live without her.

WILDISH. I have a mistress too, so much above her sex, so fair, so witty, so engaging, that I must enjoy her or I perish!

BELLAMY. How? Enjoy her! Take heed, friend.

WILDISH. I mean all honor to her.

BELLAMY. Would you possess the mistress of your friend?

WILDISH. Would you possess the mistress of your friend?

BELLAMY. How, sir, do you echo me?

WILDISH. The case, my lord, is so: once, there was nothing in the world so dear to me as you; but since I knew my mistress, I would quit all that is precious in the world ere I would lose her.

BELLAMY. What do I hear! Sir, have you then possession of her?

WILDISH. A sanguine man is never out of hope; I have her in imagination now, methinks.

BELLAMY. Methinks you go too fast, sir. You know my temper. Sir, how long do you think that I can bear a rival?

WILDISH. I can consider nothing but her, and her, and only her.

BELLAMY. You slight me, sir.

WILDISH. I hope I have more manners.

CHARLES. Oh, how I tremble! They will fight, and I am lost forever!

COUNT. [*Aside*] Dey seem in de passion. If dey two be mad, as to makè de duel, dey vill takè me for de second, against dat littel jentilman, de page; and I have seen de page in France fence like de diable. He vill puttè his rapier in my bodee; me vill steal away. (*Steals out*)

BELLAMY. I am agreed upon articles with her father, who is her guardian.

WILDISH. And I am endeavoring to agree upon articles with her, which is a shorter way.

BELLAMY. But 'tis not so fair a way.

WILDISH. How—not so fair?

BELLAMY. No; nor can any man enjoy her while I live.

WILDISH. 'Sdeath! What do you say! Defend yourself. [*Draws*]

BELLAMY. [*Drawing*] I am always ready to do that.

(*They fight.* CHARLES *runs out.* WILDISH *drops his sword, then strives to run into* BELLAMY, *who offers him his*)

CHARLES. Help! help! Murder! murder! Help! help!

BELLAMY. Hold, sir; hold! You want a sword; pray, make use of mine.

WILDISH. You are generous, my lord; my life's yours, and so it was before, and whatsoever I could call mine was so—except my mistress.

BELLAMY. Let us be still such friends: there's not a man on earth I value equal with you.

Enter CHARLES

CHARLES. They are embracing! Bless'd Heav'n!—I hope my lord's not hurt.

BELLAMY. What remains then but we proceed like men of reason—each take his way to gain the divine creature's love? And since one must be forever miserable, let her be arbitress of our two fates.

WILDISH. You still possess the same honor which you ever had; I am now your most unhappy, but most faithful friend.

(*They embrace*)

Enter the Count

COUNT. Is de fight done? Oh, dey embrace; is no dangere.

WILDISH. You most impudent cowardly dog! If you had not run away, you might have parted us and not have suffered friends to fight. (*Kicks him*)

COUNT. Hold, hold! Is ver well, you kickè de French count! Begar, you show de breeding; kickè de count! You takè me for de barbier; ver fine, yes indeed!

WILDISH. Sirrah, you shall be count no longer: this frolic shall not turn to earnest.

COUNT. I vill be gone an gettè de ladee, for all dat. Adieu. Jerny, me vill no stay to be kickè. [*Exit*]

WILDISH. My lord, I must take off this rogue; my honor may be questioned. For, though I hate the affected creature,[1] I would not have this go on to a marriage or a contract. I'll follow him.

BELLAMY. You have reason! by what I overheard, 'twill come to one of them if you prevent 'em not.

Exit WILDISH

Come, Charles, come along with me; this evening all the company will be in the Fair, and there I must meet my mistress.

CHARLES. [*Aside*] What deadly sound is this! on every side I am lost!

Exeunt

(TRIM, *in the churchyard, and* SIR HUMPHREY *standing close under a pillar of the church;* [*neither sees the other*])

TRIM. I could not have imagined that this French count should be so devoid of breeding and the decencies which become all gentlemen, as to make me wait so long upon so important an occasion.

SIR HUMPHREY. This damned French count will stay here forever, I think: a pox on him for a bloodthirsty rascal! But I will outstay him, and face him down that I waited here for him, and there may be hopes it may be taken up. Gad take me, he's a murd'rous rogue, and I will not fight! I durst have sworn he had been a coward.

TRIM. Will he never appear?

Enter LADY FANTAST, MISTRESS FANTAST, *and two* Men Servants

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, madam, I am ruined if my dear count should fight! My passion is extreme, as is his for me.

LADY FANTAST. I cannot blame thee, daughter: he is the most charming person that ever my eyes beheld!

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, madam, should he fall, I never can survive him! *Hélas, mon pauvre cœur!*[2]

LADY FANTAST. Sir Humphrey was seen to come into the churchyard.

TRIM. Here is company; I must retire.

SIR HUMPHREY. Ounds, the rogue will find me out! He comes upon me!

(*He stands up close;* TRIM *comes upon him*)

TRIM. Ha! who's this?

SIR HUMPHREY. Oh, pox! Is it he? Jack, Jack, little Jack! nown Jack, my lad!

TRIM. "Jack! Jack! Jack!" Sir, you are too familiar, and by your apish gesticulations have endeavored to expose my person on all occasions; for which, now we are opportunely met, I will chastise you, as becomes a gentleman.

SIR HUMPHREY. Why Jack! nown Jack! What, art thou mad? Prithee, kiss me.

TRIM. I will salute you in another manner.

(*Strikes him with his sword*)

SIR HUMPHREY. Why, Jack, Jack! prithee, leave fooling.

1 Mistress Fantast.

2 Woe, my poor heart.

TRIM. Draw, or I will sacrifice you to my just revenge this very individual moment. Have at you!

SIR HUMPHREY. Hold, hold!, This rogue will kill me.

(*He draws.* TRIM *pushes at him, and his sword falls;* SIR HUMPHREY *takes it up*)

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, Heaven! there they are fighting! Run, run, and save the Count! Oh, save the—

(*She runs and* LADY FANTAST *after her*)

LADY FANTAST. Oh, save the Count! save the Count!

SIR HUMPHREY. Take your life—I give you your life! and learn how you provoke me another time.

MRS. FANTAST. Pish! are these two here?

SIR HUMPHREY. Take notice, I give him his life.

MRS. FANTAST. Is this all? Madam, let's go.

LADY FANTAST. Come on.

Exeunt hastily

TRIM. Sir, you have good fortune only, but no valor to boast of.

SIR HUMPHREY. Sir, I have disarmed you, and there's an end on't.

TRIM. You will return my rapier, as becomes a gentleman?

SIR HUMPHREY. Gad take me, not I, till you come in the Fair; for aught I know, a whim may take you to fight again.

TRIM. Sure, I have a greater share of honor, and a greater stock of breeding, than to commit such an error against him whom fortune has presented with that advantage.

SIR HUMPHREY. Udsbud, I'll not trust you: follow me. But I am resolved to cudgel this damnable count for a coward.

TRIM. And I likewise; and surely cudgels will render him obnoxious to the hate and scorn of Madam Fantast.

SIR HUMPHREY. I'll lay him on. Come, follow me. *Exit*

TRIM. That persons should frequent Bury, and suck in no breeding, is, I must confess, prodigious! *Exit*

SCENE [III]. *The Fair.* [*Hawkers*] *cry their several wares*

Enter WILDISH: *to him, the* Count

WILDISH. Where is this damned count? Oh, here.—Do you hear, sirrah? I am told you have succeeded so far with this fantastic foolish creature that she will marry you.

COUNT. Den, begar, I have makè de French count ver vel.

WILDISH. If you make any further application, I will cut your throat. But in the first place I will un-count you and cut off your train, sir.

COUNT. Vel, vel, vat you please: *ma foi*, she lovè me ver vel. Sall I makè de fornication vid her? begar, I vill no marry, upon my *honneur*.

WILDISH. I had rather you should do that than marry her, but I will have no more love to her. And then carry on your countship as much as you will; you may have your choice of others. But be sure to use the cowards scurvily.

COUNT. I warrant you, I vill beatè dem.

WILDISH. (*Aside*) Then cudgelling will ensue.

COUNT. [*Aside*] Jerny, he cuttè my troat! Begar, me makè de great laugh at dat: he no dare be hanga. Me vill havè de ladeè for all dis; me know de law.

Enter four Ladies

1ST LADY. Oh, Monsieur le Count, *serviteur*!

2D LADY. Monsieur, your humble servant.

3D LADY. Monsieur, I am yours, I assure you.

4TH LADY. Oh, my lord, we thought the Fair had lost you.

COUNT. Madams, me kisse all your hande: me would be two, tree, four count for your saka. [*Aside*] Begar, me vill makè two, tree, four cuckold, and marry de ladeè too.

(*He walks forward, with two on each hand*)

Enter GERTRUDE

WILDISH. Oh, my most cruel mistress!

GERTRUDE. Oh, my most ungracious servant. Can I come nowhere but you must cross me with your unlucky countenance?

WILDISH. You can come nowhere but I will endeavor to bless myself with the sight of yours, or I must die.

GERTRUDE. Oh, that it were in my power to make a lover hang himself! then I would triumph for the rest of my poor, deluded sex. They talk of being martyrs, and dying, and dying, and such stuff, but would I could see one of 'em die once! That would be worth the seeing.

WILDISH. My pretty, charming tyrant, sure you are not so bloody-minded!

GERTRUDE. Well, I am of opinion that a lady is no more to be accounted a beauty till she has killed her man, than the bullies think one a fine gentleman till he has killed his.

WILDISH. I must beg leave to be a little more serious with you.

GERTRUDE. Never. Why, you'll come to the point then, which I can never endure. Love in jest is but just tolerable, but serious love is duller than a rhyming play.

WILDISH. My case is now more desperate than I thought. I have discovered that my greatest friend, a man of worth and honor, is my rival.

GERTRUDE. Ne'er the more desperate for that; 'twas full as desperate before. But, if you be a true friend to him, give over troubling me.

WILDISH. How! have you then made choice of him?

GERTRUDE. Of neither: but, if I can be once rid of you, he is somewhat modester, and I doubt not but to shake him off. Here he comes.

Enter LORD BELLAMY

WILDISH. These free-spirited ladies are hard to be subdued. A man may get ten modest, meek, and shamefaced ladies ere he can conquer one of these; they have not the heart to deny.

GERTRUDE. My lord, I beseech your lordship, no love in the Fair.

BELLAMY. How hard is my condition, who have so cruel a mistress and so deserving a rival!—and, which is most unfortunate, my greatest friend too!

WILDISH. In the first part of my character you do me too much honor; but in the latter you are just.

GERTRUDE. So! Here's a fine subject for a love-and-honor poet! But you are in no danger of him, for I am resolved to keep myself free and incline to none. Methinks 'tis air I tread! How light I am without a yoke!

Enter OLDWIT

OLDWIT. Oh, my little Gatty! [*To* BELLAMY] Ha! my lord! here's flesh and blood for you! Will she not make a rare bedfellow?

GERTRUDE. Fie, sir, what do you mean? Farewell. (*She walks out*)

OLDWIT. You must both sup with me, my lord and you, sir. I have had company with me, and we have had such a discourse about wit—they, of the new wit, and I, of the old wit—and my own things I writ in the last age.

WILDISH. Well, and you run 'em down, I make no doubt.

Enter LADY FANTAST *and* MRS. FANTAST

LADY FANTAST. Servant, ladies.

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, Monsieur le Count, I am o'erjoyed to see you safe!

COUNT. Safe, madam! Begar, Trim and Sir Noddy be de two great coward indeed, and me beata dem like two dogue; yes, *fait*.

MRS. FANTAST. [*Aside*] If your pretended passion have reality, follow me to our house. You are in danger for my sake, and I will stick to you with my life and fortune. Come instantly; there are spies upon us. Madam, come away.

LADY FANTAST. I come, dear child.

Exeunt LADY FANTAST *and* MISTRESS FANTAST

COUNT. (*Aside*) Poor roguè! she love me *extrêmement*! Begar, Monsieur Wildish is an ass, and me vill have de ladeè for all him.

OLDWIT. What? a French barber and peruke-maker, and no count! Hang him, he would not drink! I thought there was no good in him.

WILDISH. I am to beg a thousand pardons of you. 'Twas my frolic, but 'tis gone too far; for, if you don't prevent it, he may marry Mrs. Fantast.

OLDWIT. Nay, faith, 'tis no great matter if he does. Would he could marry the mother too; for, under the rose, never man was so plagued with a couple of impertinent, fantastic jades, as I am with them. And to complete the affliction, they must pretend to wit before me, and will allow me to have none!

WILDISH. That indeed is most unsufferable.

OLDWIT. Aye, is't not?

(*The* Count *is very busy talking with the four* Ladies; *on* TRIM'S *entrance, he makes up to him*)

Enter TRIM

WILDISH. Now is your time, Count, to put an affront upon that coward.

COUNT. Lettè me alone for dat.—Begar, I am amazè dat de coward dare show his face anywhere. Begar, I vill pluckè you by de nose because you no dare meeta me.

TRIM. And I will make that return which becometh a man of honor to do in like cases.

(*He cudgels him. The* Ladies *shriek and run away*)

COUNT. Jerny, vat is dis? vat you do?—You canè de Count?—Begar, you show de breeding.—Hold, hold! vat you do?—Monsieur Vildish, my lor, stand by me!

(*He draws, and* TRIM *lays him on. He runs away, and meets* SIR HUMPHREY *on the other side of the stage, who cudgels him too. He runs backward and forward, and is cudgelled on both sides. The* Constable *with a guard enters, and knocks* TRIM *and* SIR HUMPHREY *down, and the* Count *escapes*)

SIR HUMPHREY. Are you there, you coward?

COUNT. Eh, *morbleu!* vat is dis?

BELLAMY. Now it works.

OLDWIT. Passing good, i'faith! Come, let's to my house.

Exeunt WILDISH, OLDWIT, *and* BELLAMY

CONSTABLE. Come, gentlemen, you shall go before the Alderman. He'll teach you to make a disturbance in the Fair.

TRIM. Sweet Mr. Constable! Sir, sir, Mr. Constable! Mr. Constable!

CONSTABLE. Away with 'em, I say.

They hale 'em out. Exeunt

ACT V

SCENE I. [*A room in* OLDWIT'S *house*]

[*Enter*] OLDWIT *and* MISTRESS GERTRUDE

OLDWIT. I shall have nothing but uproars and quarrels in my family. Trim and Sir Humphrey have quarreled with the Count about Madam Fantast, with a pox to her! and even now my Lord Bellamy and Mr. Wildish have fought about you, as the page said, and I heard it.

GERTRUDE. How! Fought about me?

OLDWIT. So I say. I shall have my foolish family the whole discourse of this tittle-tattle town. Look you, daughter, I knew not of Mr. Wildish's love to you. They have both very good estates, but Mr. Wildish is a wit—a great wit, i'faith. I leave you to your choice.

GERTRUDE. I thank you, sir: then I choose neither of 'em nor any other.

OLDWIT. Thou art so wild and such a skittish filly, you must be tamed and married. Come, come, determine your choice suddenly, which they have passed their honors shall determine them; or battle and murder may ensue about you.

GERTRUDE. I am not so vain to believe that.

OLDWIT. Be not so foolish to believe otherwise. Look you, they are coming in, and you are to sit upon life and death. Be an upright judge, and do not delay justice:

I must have an end of this suit presently. Farewell. *Exit* [OLDWIT]

GERTRUDE. A very grave judge shall I be, without doubt! But I think the petticoat may vie for wisdom and sincerity with the long robe, before our late restoration.

Enter CHARLES

CHARLES. Madam, this letter, which fell from your ladyship accidentally, came into my lord's hands; and he commanded me to deliver it to you unread and unopened, tho' he knew the hand. *Exit* [CHARLES]

GERTRUDE. How? my note fallen into his hands! How unlucky was this!—Ha, gone! —How strangely this youth resembles my sister Philadelphia!—This is handsomely done of my lord, and like a man of honor.

Enter LORD BELLAMY, *and* WILDISH. CHARLES *steals in after them*

WILDISH. Madam, behold a pair of rivals, hand in hand and friends.

BELLAMY. Who come to prostrate themselves at your feet, and must from your fair mouth expect their doom.

CHARLES. (*Aside*) Oh, she will choose my lord, and I must perish!

WILDISH. To whomever you shall give leave to continue your servant, the other will quietly retire and suffer his hard fate with all the patience that he can. But if I am rejected, I shall be forever miserable.

BELLAMY. And to me, Heaven knows, not all the world besides can recompense the loss of you.

CHARLES. [*Aside*] Ah me!

GERTRUDE. Are you resolved to be in earnest, and would you make me so? I have not yet determined to marry anyone.

WILDISH. Must we then both sue on, and try by constant service to obtain your heart?

GERTRUDE. No, no: you will oblige me more if you will both desist. I have that joy in freedom that I cannot think of parting with it yet.

BELLAMY. You are born in command, and always must be free.

WILDISH. I love so, madam, I must be your slave forever.

GERTRUDE. Yes, if you love, so long I may keep you at my command; but this same whoreson marriage kills all love, and makes best friends fall out.

BELLAMY. Nothing can ever make my love decrease.

GERTRUDE. Yes, if I love again—as fire takes out fire.

WILDISH. Not all your cruelty can tame my love which, if it be so raging now, what would your kindness make it?

GERTRUDE. Oh, marriage is a sovereign julep, and thirst grows less apace by drinking.

BELLAMY. Not where 'tis a distemper, a violent fever—as all love is, sure.

GERTRUDE. Too violent to last.

WILDISH. Madam, in short, if you do not determine which of us shall have leave to sue, implicitly you give it both of us.

GERTRUDE. Is that your logic, sir? No; in the first place I never will give you leave to make the least address to me more.

CHARLES. Oh, I am lost!

(*Swoons, and falls down upon a chair*)

BELLAMY. What's the matter?

GERTRUDE. Your page is in a swoon. Help, help! Open his breast. Oh, Heaven! this is a woman!

BELLAMY. } A woman!
WILDISH. }

GERTRUDE. She comes to herself.

CHARLES. (*In whisper* [*to* GERTRUDE]) Oh, madam, I am your sister: for Heaven's sake conceal me!

GERTRUDE. Run up privately into my chamber quickly.—I am amazed! This is prodigious!

BELLAMY. A woman! Madam, I was never so surprised.

GERTRUDE. No doubt you are surprised, and so was she. I believe she is run out of doors in haste enough.

BELLAMY. Accursed misfortune! I am undone forever! I'll hasten and have a full account of all this matter. *Exit hastily*

GERTRUDE. (*Aside*) I hope he knew her not. My sister!—This is an admirable lover!

Let my wise father keep him to himself; I have done with him.

WILDISH. Will you be pleased then to begin with me? I am the truest lover of my sex.

GERTRUDE. If you are, I'll keep you so: for, should I think of marrying you, I give up my dominion. No, no! I will domineer seven years first.

WILDISH. 'Sdeath, madam! seven years! What, do you take me for a patriarch? Serve seven years? They might stay who begun at fourscore to get sons and daughters, but I have but a short time to live.

GERTRUDE. I am sure, if I should marry you, I should have but a short time to reign.

WILDISH. Consider, madam!

GERTRUDE. I have considered. Farewell.

Exeunt

[*Enter*] Count [*and*] MRS. FANTAST

MRS. FANTAST. How glad I am, to see you safe! Your life is beset for my sake, and I am bound in honor to protect it.

COUNT. Madam, you havè de great share of *honneur*, and de great share of de beauteè. But for de rival, I vill beat and killè dem all.

MRS. FANTAST. They are a greater number, monsieur, than you imagine.

COUNT. Begar, all dat look upon you are de rival; butte dey dat makè love, I vill makè de example. I had killè two of dem just now, but de Fair all rise upon me and make me makè de retreat.

MRS. FANTAST. Heav'n grant you be not *blessée*, monsieur.

COUNT. Me have no wound, madam, but vat you givè me trough de 'art. De dangere of de rival, *morbleu!* me despisè; me vill runnè dem trough de bodee dus, in quart, second, tierce! Ha, ha, ha! (*He thrusts with his drawn sword*) Butte you can no savè my life if you no lovè my person and marry vid my person.

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, *je suis rouge*—you make me blush. I fear you have *découvré*[1] more of my *tendresse* than I would have had you.

COUNT. Madamma, if you vill makè me your husband, you stoppe all de insolance of de rival, and makè me 'appy beyond de varle. Else, me vill be bound in *honneur* to killè two, tree rival every day—every day, madam, and dat vill be bloody varke. Butte is all one for dat, if you no marry vid me; me am desperate.

MRS. FANTAST. Tho' I must confess I never met such charms in any person, yet I should be censured for being too precipitous in agreeing so soon to your honorable proposals.

COUNT. Vee vill go into France, beyond de censure, to de great chateau of min, as big as Amptong Coor,[2] vid de great canaille, de great park, de grand royalty, vid two, tree grand chateau beside. Buttè it must be sodain, for de Grand Monarque expectè me.

Enter LADY FANTAST

LADY FANTAST. Come, daughter, I have been acquainted before with my lord Count's honorable passion towards you, and he is a person of undoubted excellence. You have full ten thousand pounds, and I shall think your fortune and your person well bestowed upon a noble gentleman of such grand merit.

COUNT. Oh, faire madamma, you do me de great *honneur*. Me no care for de moneè; it is de person. Dis hope makè me all on flamè. Madam, gettè de parson—de minister, to dispatchè de business presantlee.

LADY FANTAST. Sir, it is night; 'tis not the canonical hour.[3]

COUNT. Is all one! De good Roman Catolique priest vill do it presantlee.

MRS. FANTAST. No, by no means; not till to-morrow, madam.

COUNT. Breakè de gold, and makè de contract den now: dat vill breakè de 'art of all de rival, and makè dem sneakè, likè de pitful roguè, begar.

LADY FANTAST. Let it be so, daughter. If by any accident you should lose the Count, we were undone.

MRS. FANTAST. *Oui, sans doubt*, I should be most miserable.

1 exposed.

2 Hampton Court. 3 See page 75, line 245 and n.

Enter LUCE *and* [NICHOLAS,] Page *to the* Count

LADY FANTAST. Oh, Luce, you are come in season.

LUCE. My lord Count, your page is here to speak with you.

COUNT. Let him come in.—Hey, page! Let all be witness of de contract: me vill be no fourb,[1] no *fripon*.[2] Upon de knee me swearè to marry dis ladeè, Madam Fantast, to-morrow in de morning. (*He kneels*)

LADY FANTAST. Daughter, you must promise. Come, never be ashamed of so transcendent a choice.

MRS. FANTAST. I am obedient. I swear to marry this noble person, *Monsieur le Count de Cheveux*, to-morrow morning.

(*She kneels*)

COUNT. Ah, madamma, now breakè de gold, de broadpiece. So, is done; and now, rise up, ma chère Countess.

MRS. FANTAST. *Eh, mon cher Count!*

LADY FANTAST. Millions of joys fall on you both! I weep for joy.

NICHOLAS. Master, they have got the report now all over the town, that you are a barber and peruke-maker; your equipage is revolted. Mr. Wildish's men talk it everywhere, and my Lord Bellamy's men, and 'tis in everybody's mouth.

COUNT. Begar, dey be de roguè, de scoundrella!—But begon from dis house, and be seen no more here; and say you can no findè me. *Exit* Page

MRS. FANTAST. Somebody's coming up —a rival, I believe. Pray, go into my closet.

(*A noise of some*[*one*] *coming upstairs*)

COUNT. Vere, vere is de closet? Begar, I vould killè de rival before your face, but is not decent, madam.

MRS. FANTAST. Madam, I beseech you, entertain 'em while I retire with *mon cher Count*.

(*They retire into the closet, where they peep out to listen*)

Enter TRIM

TRIM. Madam, I kiss your ladyship's fair hands.

LADY FANTAST. Your servant, sweet Mr. Trim.

TRIM. Could I think to have lived to have seen this inauspicious day, who had so long admired the beauty and adored the mind of my divine Dorinda? That I, having devoted not only my heart, but all the actions of my life to her service, should be thus sacrificed to a Frenchman!

LADY FANTAST. 'Tis a most fatal mistake. She bears a most profound respect towards the worthy Mr. Trim.

TRIM. At his first approach her sad indifference appeared in the bud, which since has sprouted up to complete scorn—and all for this Frenchman, this false count, this impostor!

LADY FANTAST. How? False count!

COUNT. [*To* MRS. FANTAST] Lettè me go! Begar, I vill runnè him trough de bodee.

MRS. FANTAST. You shall not stir.

TRIM. Yes, he is a false count, and a true barber and peruke-maker.

COUNT. Jerny, dam roguè makè de great lie of me! Lettè me go, madamma; me vill killè de roguè for dis affront!

MRS. FANTAST. I will not part with you out of my arms.

LADY FANTAST. Sir, be not so temerarious. He is one of the noblesse, and his nature's vindicative in honor's cause.

TRIM. Hang him, snip-snap rogue, I contemn him. I challenged him. He is a coward, and durst not answer my cartel to meet me, for which I exercised him plentifully with this numerical cane.

COUNT. O de dam lyè roguè! Begar, me must killè him, for mine *honneur*. *Morbleu*, madamma, me did beata dis rascal, like de spaniel dogue, indeed.

MRS. FANTAST. Let him lie on. I'll revenge it.

LADY FANTAST. You must pardon me, sir, if I give not credit to what you say. I am assured he's as brave a gentleman as e'er drew sword, and a great commander.

TRIM. I do aver that he's a barber in Piccadilly.

1 knave. 2 cheat.

LADY FANTAST. Ha, ha, ha! that's a jest! My daughter and I mistake in breeding and quality!

Enter SIR HUMPHREY

SIR HUMPHREY. Oh, madam, I am come to vent my just resentments for the slight your daughter has put upon me for this damned rascally count, whom I tweaked by the nose last night. I challenged him: he dared not meet, but, by cross-biting, made Jack here—little Jack and me—meet, and fall out! And you saw me give him his life.

TRIM. If you hold your own at any rate, boast not once more: if you persist, you will awaken my fury till it may destroy you.

SIR HUMPHREY. Prithee, Jack, hold thy peace; thou art the peevishest fellow! But after all this count of yours is a rogue, a cheat. He's a barber in Piccadilly.

LADY FANTAST. Ha, ha, ha! as if my daughter and I could take a barber for a count! Ha, ha, ha!

SIR HUMPHREY. Udsbud, this fellow's a barber. I can prove it upon him.

COUNT. Oh, madamma, me beg upon de knee dat you vill lettè me but killè dese two, and me vill killè no more, upon mine *honneur*. De devil can no makè de lie so.

SIR HUMPHREY. Nay, Gad take me, I don't much care; I have a good estate, and I shall have women enough court me where I need not apprehend a French count, made of a barber and a peruke-maker—a damned coward, too, that durst not meet me. But I cudgelled him so in the Fair, Jack—ha! that he will not be very active awhile.

COUNT. Ah, madam, dey provokè me beyondè de patiance.

MRS. FANTAST. Go in, I say, and let me alone with them. (*She locks him in*)—I have overheard you and wonder much you dare calumniate a person of such breeding, quality, and honor as the Count! Your lives were not worth a farthing if he heard you. Is this like gentlemen?

SIR HUMPHREY. Honor? Hang him, scoundrel! Gad take me, I cudgelled him till my arm aches—a damned cowardly barber and peruke-maker!

TRIM. And I chastised him in like manner most exorbitantly.

MRS. FANTAST. You are insolent thus to traduce a person of his worth.

LADY FANTAST. Call you this breeding—to challenge and abuse a person of quality in my house for his gallantry to my daughter?

MRS. FANTAST. How dare you commit the insolence to challenge a person whom I favor, and then to blacken his unspotted fame, when I know you dare not meet him, and he cudgelled you?

TRIM. Admired Dorinda, the faculties of whose noble soul did use to shine more bright than to be led into so gross an error as to mistake a barber for a count—

MRS. FANTAST. Ha, ha, ha! my lady and I mistake breeding and quality, and take a barber for a nobleman? *Mon Dieu!* this is malice—mere envy of my favors.

LADY FANTAST. If my daughter and I can mistake in such material points, who can be judges?

SIR HUMPHREY. Nay, for my part, madam, if you must love a cudgelled barber and take him for a valiant count, make much of him; I shall desist. There are more ladies, Heav'n be thanked.

TRIM. Yes, sir, there are more ladies; but if any man affirms that my fair Dorinda has an equal, I thus fling down my glove and do demand the combat for her honor. (*Aside*) This is a nice point of honor I have hit.

SIR HUMPHREY. Why, Jack, Jack, nown Jack! what, art thou mad? Jack, Jack!

TRIM. Prithee, Jack me no Jacks; but speak with honor of my mistress, or draw.

LADY FANTAST. What, more quarrels in my house!

SIR HUMPHREY. Prithee, Jack; why, I gave thee thy life, man. What a devil! if you be so peevish, fare you well. Ladies, your humble servant,—and a pox of all cowardly French peruke-makers, I say.

Exit

MRS. FANTAST. *Quelle insolance!* I will not hear his honor lessened so.

TRIM. 'Tis an undoubted verity, most inevitably true, that he is a barber, madam.

MRS. FANTAST. 'Tis false; 'tis the basest malice to blacken men in absence. He is a person in whom all charms are met.

TRIM. He?—Charms? Alas, Dorinda, whither do you stray?

MRS. FANTAST. Begone! avoid my presence.

TRIM. Can my Dorinda—

MRS. FANTAST. I say begone.

TRIM. Will you not hear?

MRS. FANTAST. No.

TRIM. I obey: I say no more at present. *Exit*

MRS. FANTAST. Monsieur, my dear Count, come forth.

COUNT. Ah, madame ma chère, mine *honneur*! De barbier! de peruke-man! *Morbleu!* vy do dey no callè me de tinkre, de jugler, vat dey vill? If you please lettè me killè dese two roguè; you vill obligè me ver mush indeed, my dear Countess.

MRS. FANTAST. Would you kill me by bringing yourself into that danger? No; let the happy lovers love and revel:

Hi sunt de pace triumphi,
Bella gerent alios.

LADY FANTAST. Here's some coming. Keep my lord Count in your lodging till three in the morning: I will have a coach ready to carry you to be married.

COUNT. I beseech you, lettè me killè but one roguè.

MRS. FANTAST. In, into the closet.

COUNT. But one, madam! Callè de count de barbier! *Jerny bleu,* vat is dis?

Enter OLDWIT

OLDWIT. Where is my most wise and subtle spouse, with her witty, well-bred daughter?

LADY FANTAST. What have you to do with wit or breeding?

OLDWIT. Such counterfeit breeding and false wit as you, old doting fop, with the most affected and fantastic thing, your daughter, do possess, I utterly renounce.

LADY FANTAST. What says the antiquated wit, with his shreds of old poets?

MRS. FANTAST. *Hélas!* You be de very fine judge indeed! Ha, ha, ha!

OLDWIT. Judge? ha, ha, ha! Have a care of losing your English before you have gotten another language. But do you hear? In earnest, do you two think that you two have either wit or breeding?

MRS. FANTAST. Think! We know we have, and that you want both is too evident by your question.

LADY FANTAST. Yes, thou old lumber full of frippery, we have, while, Heaven knows, you have neither.

OLDWIT. Ounds—what, I no wit?

LADY FANTAST. No.

MRS. FANTAST. No.

OLDWIT. No, no! Why, thou piece of clockwork, thou hast no teeth, no hair, no eyebrows, no complexion, but what cost thee money; and but for iron bodice, art as crooked as a bugle-horn—and I have made an epigram upon thee.

She's bent like a ninepence; and had been quite broken,
Had not Nature intended the Devil a token:
Sure, Heav'n in its indignation hath made her,
And in her mam's crooked paunch neck and heels laid her.

There's wit, old Sybil, for thee!

LADY FANTAST. That wit, you silly old fumbler? You are an opprobrium to the name of wit, thou ill-bred old sot.

MRS. FANTAST. You a wit! eh, Gud! The very spirit of Grub Street reigns in you.

OLDWIT. Thou young Jezebel, with nothing natural about thee! Thou look'st as if thou wert painted by some lewd painter for the sign of Folly, with such turning-up of eyes, and screwing of faces, with convulsions in your mouth.

She makes wry mouths, and chews every word,
Like an old sow—

You understand me. There's wit for you both now, you brace of flirts! I—no wit, quoth they!

MRS. FANTAST. If rudeness, railing, and ill-breeding may pass for wit, you are plentifully endued; but I despise it.

LADY FANTAST. An old soaker, with a white head, a red face, a brain clouded with fumes and empty of wit, full of whims and maggots.

OLDWIT. Come, come, you brace of fop-doodles; where's your French barber you are both so fond of, and you are to marry, Mrs. Wit? A pox on him! if he could marry you both, with all my heart.

LADY FANTAST. What, have you gotten that silly story too? Ha, ha!

MRS. FANTAST. This is raised by some London wit, some laugher: they call it shamming.

LADY FANTAST. }
MRS. FANTAST. } A barber! Ha, ha, ha!

MRS. FANTAST. Can we be deceived in quality and breeding?

LADY FANTAST. Not know a mechanic, a barber, from a noble count? very likely!

(*Both laugh*)

OLDWIT. (*Mocking them*) Ha, ha, ha! You most abominable brace of conceited, affected fools! What a pox! my house will become ridiculous, the scorn and laughter of the whole country. Here are twenty people in town can prove he is a barber.

LADY FANTAST. Go, dotard, go!—a barber! Ha, ha, ha!

MRS. FANTAST. O silly! A barber! Ha, ha, ha! *Mon Dieu!*

OLDWIT. Ounds! You make me mad, you most incorrigible pair of fools! Well, for once I'll take more care of you than you of yourself. I'll have this rogue barber, if he be above ground, and make an example of him.

Enter WILDISH

Here's one can tell you who your Count is.

WILDISH. Why, he is my peruke-maker, and he is a barber. I put him upon this frolic, thinking to make sport in the time of the Fair, but never thought it would have come to earnest.

LADY FANTAST. Ha, ha, ha! this is finely carried on, indeed!

MRS. FANTAST. Envy! Malice! Believe a London wit!—a jeerer! a scoffer! a shammer! ha, ha, ha!

OLDWIT. Ounds! I'll have no more fooling about this business. Produce this barber; he came into my house, has not gone out since, and you must have hid him.

MRS. FANTAST. I hide a man in my apartment! I defy you, insolent.

OLDWIT. I'll see; is he not behind the bed —or in it? Ha, I cannot find him. He must be somewhere in these rooms.

LADY FANTAST. What can provoke you to abuse my daughter thus?

MRS. FANTAST. Must I, who have been admired (I may say adored) for virtue, have my reputation questioned thus by you?

OLDWIT. Are you angry to be kept from marrying a barber?

LADY FANTAST. How dare you domineer in my house thus?

OLDWIT. Stand by, old fool! Who is in this closet? Let me see! (*Breaks it open*) Oh, sheep-biter,[1] are you here?

[*Drags him out*]

LADY FANTAST. Oh, Heav'n, the Count here!

MRS. FANTAST. *Mon Dieu!* How came you here?

OLDWIT. Come, Mr. Barber, instead of Monsieur le Count.

COUNT. Vat you mean? Begar, I vill have de satisfaction; and, vere it not for de reverence to de ladeè, begar, me vould cut all your troat. *Morbleu!*

WILDISH. Why, sirrah rascal, are you not my barber and peruke-maker? Did I not set you up for a count? Is not that my suit of clothes?

COUNT. Do not provoke me to runne you trough the bodee: me am amazè. *Ventre bleu!* Madam, dey be all starkè mad; dey dream, and dey talk in deir sleep. Jerny, me can no tell vat dey mean! Do dey treat de French count in England dus? Oh, brutal!

WILDISH. If you dare persist in this business I will cut your throat infallibly.

[1] A petty thief.

COUNT. Lettè me alone. Begar, you no dare be hanga.

MRS. FANTAST. Nay, then 'tis time to speak. Good Mr. Impudence, what have you to say to my husband?

OLDWIT. } Your husband!
WILDISH. }

LADY FANTAST. Yes, sir, her husband—so he is.

COUNT. Yes, vat you say to dis ladee's husban? Ha! *morbleu!*

OLDWIT. [*To* LADY FANTAST] Oh, thou damnable betrayer of thy daughter! I warrant you, I'll have a trick for him, and have him in the pillory. [*To* MRS. FANTAST] You shall see your husband peep through wood, I warrant you. Come, sir, let's go.

[*Exeunt* WILDISH *and* OLDWIT]

MRS. FANTAST. He is gone with some wicked design or other; let us fly.

COUNT. Me vili do vat you pleas, but Monsieur le Count did never fly before.

LADY FANTAST. Come, haste and escape, while he's gone out. *Exeunt*

Enter MISTRESS GERTRUDE, *her* SISTER PHILADELPHIA, *and* LORD BELLAMY

PHILADELPHIA. Had not my sister, against my will, surprised me with the sight of you, I ne'er had seen your eyes again, but had found out some melancholy hole and died for shame.

BELLAMY. I had been then completely miserable. [*Aside*] She's excellently fair!

PHILADELPHIA. With what confusion must I look on you! I never shall behold you but with a face covered with blushes.

BELLAMY. [*Kneeling*] The infinite honor you have done me o'erwhelms me with such shame that, being conscious how little I deserve, I cannot bear it. But, madam, I will never rise from hence till you have pardoned me for every command I had the impudence to lay upon you.

PHILADELPHIA. There is no color for a pardon. I owe you all the thanks I am capable of expressing, and I can forgive all the world but myself. I beseech your lordship, impute the rashness of my conduct to my madness—that madness which my father drove me to, who would have forced me to marry a fop I hated. You I had seen in public places often. What moved me to run to you, I know not; pray, think the best.

GERTRUDE. Come, sister, comfort yourself; such things have been done. The knowledge of this is in a narrow compass. You differ from yourself so in this habit, you cannot be known to have worn the other.

BELLAMY. It is so much to my advantage, that I will inquire no farther of the cause; but such it is, that makes me owe my life, and all I have to you, which I shall prostrate at your feet.

PHILADELPHIA. My kinswoman, my lady Loveland, had never assisted me in my rash design but that distracted, I know not how, she thought I would have killed myself had she not answered my desires.

BELLAMY. A thousand blessings on her!

PHILADELPHIA. My lord, I beseech you, do me the right to believe that I intended to have died ere you should have discovered me; for so, Heaven knows, I did.

BELLAMY. That was unkindly designed, to lock up my chief happiness.

GERTRUDE. Here are some coming; pray, retire quickly.

(BELLAMY *and* PHILADELPHIA *retire*)

This is a happy turn! The house is in some uproar; whate'er's the matter?

Enter LADY FANTAST, MISTRESS FANTAST, *and four* Ladies

LADY FANTAST. 'Tis true; this damned count is a barber! The barber in Cook Row knows him, and he has seen him often at London.

MRS. FANTAST. I am undone forever!—lost!—wretched!—miserable! Oh me! I will hide my head within some hole, and ne'er be seen again.

GERTRUDE. How? what, this man of quality and breeding a barber?

LADY FANTAST. What's that to you, minx?

GERTRUDE. Could you mistake in quality and breeding?

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, *impertinante*!

[1ST LADY.] What, married to a barber!

GERTRUDE. How? Married!

2D LADY. What pity 'tis!

Enter Count

MRS. FANTAST. Oh, I shall burst! He is not my husband: I only said so for fear my father-in-law and Wildish should have murdered him in their rage.

COUNT. Vat, you rènouncè me? Begar, me vill makè you know dat me am your husband.

MRS. FANTAST. Avaunt, thou impudent fellow.

GERTRUDE. I could burst my spleen at this; but I have more serious business.

Exit

Enter OLDWIT

COUNT. Is all one, *morbleu!* If you no lettè me have your person, me vill havè your monee. *Teste bleu!*

OLDWIT. Say you so, sirrah? I have confined you from flying, and have officers now to wait on you; and I will have your ears, and have you whipped.

COUNT. Is all one for dat; me vill losè de two eare, and be wippe two, tree, four time, for ten tousan pound; and, begar, me vill havè de portion, do vat you vill.

OLDWIT. Enter. Here, take him away to jail.

(Officers *enter and hale the* Count *away*)

3D LADY. 'Tis no great matter; she was a proud, fantastic creature.

4TH LADY. Nay, for my part, I am glad on't.

Enter TRIM *and* SIR HUMPHREY

1ST LADY. How sneakingly he looks! He is but a pitiful fellow!

2D LADY. He looks like a barber, methinks. Lord, that I should not discover it before!

3D LADY. I think I was bewitched, for my part.

4TH LADY. That I should ever take him to be a count!

TRIM. Madam, as in duty bound, I wish you happy in your choice.

SIR HUMPHREY. Madam, much joy to you and your Count Barber. Ha, ha, ha!

MRS. FANTAST. I'll run away and never see the face of a man again. *Exit*

LADY FANTAST. Mr. Oldwit, farewell; let me have my coach. I'll never see Bury or you after this hour.

OLDWIT. Who waits there? Bring the coach and six horses to the door; and grooms, be ready instantly.

LADY FANTAST. Farewell forever.

OLDWIT. We'll kiss at parting, 'faith.

(*They kiss; she goes out in haste;* [*he kneels*])

—Heav'n be praised for this great deliverance: no more shall I be plagued with that damned wit and breeding!

Enter WILDISH

WILDISH. What, on your knees?

OLDWIT. Aye, faith, and never had more reason in my life.

Enter MISTRESS GERTRUDE, *conducting* PHILADELPHIA *and* LORD BELLAMY

GERTRUDE. Pray, sir, down on your knees once more.

OLDWIT. Say'st thou so, my girl?

GERTRUDE. Do you know this face?

OLDWIT. My daughter!—Oh, Heav'n! ten thousand welcomes! as many blessings on thy head! Rise, dear child. Where hast thou been? When didst thou come? Which way? I am o'erjoyed!

GERTRUDE. Ask no questions; 'tis no time to ask questions. Here she is.

OLDWIT. Canst thou forgive me, child? I'll ne'er endeavor more to force thy inclinations. Thou art free.

PHILADELPHIA. 'Tis I must ask your pardon, sir.

OLDWIT. Oh, name it not.

BELLAMY. Now, sir, can you part with what you love so dearly? If so, I beg her on my knees.

OLDWIT. How's this? I am amazed, astonished! My head turns round! How came this about?

BELLAMY. By love and fate, that govern everything. I loved this daughter while she was lost to you and me, and if she will accept of me, I have all I wish on earth.

OLDWIT. Have I my senses, my lord?

GERTRUDE. Again asking questions! Come, come, do the duty of a father, and bestow your daughter when she has, like a free woman, chosen for herself.

OLDWIT. My head turns round! But come, daughter; are you willing, Phil?

PHILADELPHIA. Yes; here I will obey.

(*Gives her hand*)

OLDWIT. All joy be with you! I am not myself.

WILDISH. Joy to my friend. This is a happy turn!

BELLAMY. I was passionate to marry the other sister because I loved her, but I think it more reasonable to marry this because she loves me.

OLDWIT. Call all my servants; lay down all my meat to the fire; set all my hogsheads abroach; call in the fiddler. Let's revel for a month at least.

Enter Servants

WILDISH. Hold, hold, sir, a little! Madam, madam! (*Pulls* GERTRUDE *by the sleeve*)

GERTRUDE. Have you anything to say to me?

WILDISH. Can you find in your heart to dispose of your sister to my friend, and not of yourself to me?

GERTRUDE. Time enough to think on that after I have tamed you and brought you up to hand. You are too wild for me, a great deal.

OLDWIT. Come, daughter, let me persuade you; let it be a general night of joy.

GERTRUDE. I think I had as good. He is the most importunate lover; I shall never be quiet for him. Well, I will dissemble no longer; here's my hand.

WILDISH. And here's my heart, which you shall ever reign in while I live.

GERTRUDE. No raptures. And know, for all my vaporing, I can obey, as well as e'er a meek, simpering milksop on 'em all; and have ever held non-resistance a doctrine fit for all wives, though for nobody else.

OLDWIT. Call in the fiddlers. I am transported! I am all air! Sirrah, go you, and set the bells a-going in both churches! Call in all my neighbors; I'll have him hanged that's sober to-night! Let every room in my house roar, that it may keep the whole town awake! Here are the fiddles; fall to dancing presently; lose no time.

(*Dance*)

Let all this night be spent in mirth and wine;
Let's lose no part of it in beastly sleep.
This is the happiest day of all my life;
I've found my daughter, and have lost my wife.

EPILOGUE

I was our author's advocate last year,
And then ye very gentle did appear.
To him ye now should more indulgence show;
Eight months he has been sick, and well we know
How very little a sick man can do.
But could he write with never so much wit,
He must despair of seeing a full pit:
Most of our constant friends have left the town,
Bravely to serve their king and country gone.
Our unfrequented theatre must mourn,
Till the brave youths triumphantly return.
Soft men of Peace enough are left at home,
Daily to cram our house, if they'd but come:
They eagerly elsewhere in throngs resort,
Crowding for places in the well-filled Court.
Here one who has been fifty years a knave,
Strives for a place, with one foot in the grave;
Another there, who did whate'er he could
Against the sovereign author of our good.
Some who rode westward at least ten miles down,

Some made blue coats at him, and stayed in town—
All these would have preferment, as if they
Had to this glorious change prepared the way.
Thus there are more admirers to each place,
Than e'er a celebrated beauty has.
And they who cannot that advancement gain
They think their mighty merits ought t'attain,
Steal to some grumbling club, and there complain:
"Pox on't! Things go not well; I'll change my side!
I thought they would for my great worth provide."
Pray, have less vanity, and learn more wit:
Come here; we've places for you all most fit,
Within our empty boxes and our pit.
But you who use to hiss, pray keep away,
And try to write before you damn a play;
'Twill then so hard a task to you appear
You will not have the heart to be severe.

LOVE FOR LOVE

A Comedy by William Congreve

Nudus agris, nudus nummis . . . paternis,

Insanire parat certa ratione modoque.

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ]

Sir Sampson Legend, father [of] Valentine and Ben

Valentine, fallen under his father's displeasure by his expensive way of living, in love with Angelica

Scandal, his friend, a free speaker

Tattle, a half-witted beau, vain of his amours, yet valuing himself for secrecy

Ben, Sir Sampson's younger son, half home-bred and half sea-bred, designed to marry Miss Prue

Foresight, an illiterate old fellow, peevish and positive, superstitious, and pretending to understand astrology, palmistry, physiognomy, omens, dreams, etc., uncle to Angelica

Jeremy, servant to Valentine

Trapland, a scrivener

Buckram, a lawyer

[Snap, a bailiff]

[Stewards, Sailors, Servants, and Singer]

Angelica, niece to Foresight, of a considerable fortune in her own hands

Mrs. Foresight, second wife of Foresight

Mrs. Frail, sister to Mrs. Foresight, a woman of the town

Miss Prue, daughter of Foresight by a former wife, a silly awkward country girl

Nurse to Miss [Prue]

Jenny, maid to Angelica

Scene: *London*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

[DEDICATION]

To the Right Honorable Charles, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex,

Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's household, and Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter, etc.

My Lord,

A young poet is liable to the same vanity and indiscretion with a young lover; and the great man who smiles upon one, and the fine woman who looks kindly upon t'other, are both of them in danger of having the favor published with the first opportunity.

But there may be a different motive, which will a little distinguish the offenders. For though one should have a vanity in ruining another's reputation, yet the other may only have an ambition to advance his own. And I beg leave, my Lord, that I may plead the latter, both as the cause and excuse of this dedication.

Whoever is king, is also the father of his country; and as nobody can dispute your Lordship's monarchy in poetry, so all that are concerned ought to acknowledge your universal patronage; and it is only presuming on the privilege of a loyal subject, that I have ventured to make this my address of thanks to your Lordship which, at the same time, included a prayer for your protection.

I am not ignorant of the common form of poetical dedications, which are generally made up of panegyrics, where the authors endeavor to distinguish their patrons by the shining characters they give them above other men. But that, my Lord, is not my business at this time, nor is your Lordship now to be distinguished. I am contented with the honor I do myself in this epistle, without the vanity of attempting to add to or explain your Lordship's character.

I confess it is not without some struggling that I behave myself in this case as I ought; for it is very hard to be pleased with a subject and yet

forbear it. But I choose rather to follow Pliny's precept than his example, when in his panegyric to the Emperor Trajan he says, "Nec minus considerabo quid aures eius pati possint, quam quid virtutibus debeatur."

I hope I may be excused the pedantry of a quotation when it is so justly applied. Here are some lines in the print (and which your Lordship read before this play was acted) that were omitted on the stage, and particularly one whole scene[1] in the third act which not only helps the design forward with less precipitation, but also heightens the ridiculous character of Foresight, which indeed seems to be maimed without it. But I found myself in great danger of a long play, and was glad to help it where I could. Though notwithstanding my care, and the kind reception it had from the town, I could heartily wish it yet shorter, but the number of different characters represented in it would have been too much crowded in less room.

This reflection on prolixity (a fault for which scarce any one beauty will atone) warns me not to be tedious now, and detain your Lordship any longer with the trifles of, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

Will. Congreve

PROLOGUE

FOR THE OPENING OF THE NEW PLAY-HOUSE, PROPOSED TO BE SPOKEN BY A WOMAN IN MAN'S CLOTHES

SENT FROM AN UNKNOWN HAND

Custom, which everywhere bears mighty sway,
Brings me to act the orator to-day:
But women, you will say, are ill at speeches;
'Tis true, and therefore I appear in breeches—
Not for example to you city wives;
That by prescription's settled for your lives.
Was it for gain the husband first consented?
Oh, yes, their gains are mightily augmented;[2]
And yet methinks it must have cost some strife—
A passive husband and an active wife!
'Tis awkward, very awkward, by my life.
But to my speech: assemblies of all nations
Still are supposed to open with orations;
Mine shall begin to show our obligations.
To you, our benefactors, lowly bowing,
Whose favors have prevented our undoing;
A long Egyptian bondage we endured
Till freedom, by your justice, we procured.
Our taskmasters were grown such very Jews
We must at length have played in wooden shoes,
Had not your bounty taught us to refuse.
Freedom's of English growth, I think, alone;
What for lost English freedom can atone?
A free-born player loathes to be compelled;
Our rulers tyrannized and we rebelled.
Freedom! the wise man's wish, the poor man's wealth,
Which you, and I, and most of us enjoy by stealth;
The soul of pleasure, and the sweet of life;
The woman's charter—widow, maid, or wife—
This they have cancelled, and thence grew the strife.
But you perhaps would have me here confess
How we obtained the favor.—Can't you guess?
Why, then I'll tell you,—for I hate a lie;
By brib'ry! arrant brib'ry!—Let me die!
I was their agent, but by Jove I swear
No honorable member had a share,
Tho' young and able members bid me fair.
I chose a wiser way to make you willing,
Which has not cost the house a single shilling.
—Now you suspect, at least, I went a-billing.
You see I'm young, and to that air of youth,
Some will add beauty and a little truth;
These pow'rful charms, improved by pow'rful arts,
Prevailed to captivate your op'ning hearts.
Thus furnish'd, I preferred my poor petition,
And bribed ye to commiserate our condition;
I laughed, and sighed, and sung, and leered upon ye
With roguish, loving looks, and that way won ye.

[1] III, iv.
[2] Making horns with hands over her head.

The young men kissed me, and the old I kissed;
And luringly I led them as I list.
The ladies in mere pity took our parts—
Pity's the darling passion of their hearts.
Thus bribing, or thus bribed, fear no disgraces;
For thus you may take bribes and keep your places.

PROLOGUE

Spoken at the Opening of the New House

The husbandman in vain renews his toil,
To cultivate each year a hungry soil;
And fondly hopes for rich and generous fruit,
When what should feed the tree devours the root;
The unladen boughs, he sees, bode certain dearth,
Unless transplanted to more kindly earth.
So, the poor husbands of the stage, who found
Their labors lost upon the ungrateful ground,
This last and only remedy have proved,
And hope new fruit from ancient stocks removed.
Well may they hope, when you so kindly aid,
Well plant a soil which you so rich have made.
As Nature gave the world to man's first age,
So from your bounty we receive this stage;
The freedom man was born to you've restored,
And to our world such plenty you afford,
It seems like Eden, fruitful of its own accord.
But since in Paradise frail flesh gave way,
And when but two were made, both went astray;
Forbear your wonder and the fault forgive,
If in our larger family we grieve
One falling Adam, and one tempted Eve.
We who remain would gratefully repay
What our endeavors can, and bring, this day,
The first-fruit offering of a virgin play.
We hope there's something that may please each taste,
And though of homely fare we make the feast,
Yet you will find variety at least.
There's humor, which for cheerful friends we got,
And for the thinking party there's a plot.
We've something, too, to gratify ill-nature,
(If there be any here) and that is satire;
Though satire scarce dares grin, 'tis grown so mild,
Or only shows its teeth as if it smiled.
As asses thistles, poets mumble wit,
And dare not bite, for fear of being bit.
They hold their pens, as swords are held by fools,
And are afraid to use their own edge-tools.
Since *The Plain Dealer's* scenes of manly rage,[1]
Not one has dared to lash this crying age.
This time the poet owns the bold essay,
Yet hopes there's no ill manners in his play:
And he declares by me, he has designed
Affront to none, but frankly speaks his mind.
And should the ensuing scenes not chance to hit,
He offers but this one excuse—'twas writ
Before your late encouragement of wit.

ACT I

Scene I. [Valentine's *lodging*]

Valentine *in his chamber reading*, Jeremy *waiting: several books upon the table*

Valentine. Jeremy!

Jeremy. Sir?

Valentine. Here, take away; I'll walk a turn, and digest what I have read.

Jeremy. (*Aside*) You'll grow devilish fat upon this paper diet.

(*Takes away the books*)

Valentine. And d'ye hear, go you to breakfast.—There's a page doubled down in Epictetus that is a feast for an emperor.

1 Wycherley's play.

JEREMY. Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

VALENTINE. Read, read, sirrah! and refine your appetite; learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind, and mortify your flesh; read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding! So Epictetus advises.

JEREMY. O Lord! I have heard much of him when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. Pray, what was that Epictetus?

VALENTINE. A very rich man—not worth a groat.

JEREMY. Humph, and so he has made a very fine feast where there is nothing to be eaten?

VALENTINE. Yes.

JEREMY. Sir, you're a gentleman, and probably understand this fine feeding; but if you please, I had rather be at board-wages. Does your Epictetus, or your Seneca here, or any of these poor rich rogues, teach you how to pay your debts without money? Will they shut up the mouths of your creditors? Will Plato be bail for you? or Diogenes, because he understands confinement, and lived in a tub, go to prison for you? 'Slife, sir, what do you mean? to mew yourself up here with three or four musty books, in commendation of starving and poverty?

VALENTINE. Why, sirrah, I have no money—you know it—and therefore resolve to rail at all that have; and in that I but follow the examples of the wisest and wittiest men in all ages, these poets and philosophers whom you naturally hate for just such another reason—because they abound in sense, and you are a fool.

JEREMY. Aye, sir, I am a fool, I know it; and yet, Heaven help me, I'm poor enough to be a wit—but I was always a fool when I told you what your expenses would bring you to; your coaches and your liveries, your treats and your balls; your being in love with a lady that did not care a farthing for you in your prosperity; and keeping company with wits that cared for nothing but your prosperity, and now, when you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

VALENTINE. Well, and now I am poor I have an opportunity to be revenged on 'em all; I'll pursue Angelica with more love than ever, and appear more notoriously her admirer in this restraint, than when I openly rivalled the rich fops that made court to her. So shall my poverty be a mortification to her pride, and perhaps make her compassionate that love which has principally reduced me to this lowness of fortune. And for the wits, I'm sure I am in a condition to be even with them.

JEREMY. Nay, your position is pretty even with theirs, that's the truth on't.

VALENTINE. I'll take some of their trade out of their hands.

JEREMY. Now Heaven, of mercy, continue the tax upon paper! You don't mean to write?

VALENTINE. Yes, I do; I'll write a play.

JEREMY. Hem!—Sir, if you please to give me a small certificate of three lines—only to certify those whom it may concern, that the bearer hereof, Jeremy Fetch by name, has for the space of seven years, truly and faithfully served Valentine Legend, Esq.; and that he is not now turned away for any misdemeanor, but does voluntarily dismiss his master from any future authority over him.

VALENTINE. No, sirrah, you shall live with me still.

JEREMY. Sir, it's impossible: I may die with you, starve with you, or be damned with your works; but to live, even three days, the life of a play, I no more expect it than to be canonized for a Muse after my decease.

VALENTINE. You are witty, you rogue! I shall want your help; I'll have you learn to make couplets, to tag the ends of acts. D'ye hear? Get the maids to crambo in an evening, and learn the knack of rhyming. You may arrive at the height of a song sent by an unknown hand; or a chocolate-house lampoon.

JEREMY. But, sir, is this the way to recover your father's favor? Why, Sir Sampson will be irreconcilable. If your younger brother should come from sea, he'd never

look upon you again. You're undone, sir; you're ruined; you won't have a friend left in the world if you turn poet.—Ah, pox confound that Will's Coffee-house! it has ruined more young men than the Royal Oak lottery—nothing thrives that belongs to't. The man of the house would have been an alderman by this time with half the trade if he had set up in the city. For my part, I never sit at the door that I don't get double the stomach that I do at a horse-race—the air upon Banstead downs is nothing to it for a whetter. Yet I never see it but the spirit of famine appears to me, sometimes like a decayed porter, worn out with pimping, and carrying billets-doux and songs—not like other porters for hire, but for the jest's sake; now like a thin chairman, melted down to half his proportion with carrying a poet upon tick, to visit some great fortune, and his fare to be paid him, like the wages of sin, either at the day of marriage, or the day of death.

VALENTINE. Very well, sir; can you proceed?

JEREMY. Sometimes like a bilked bookseller, with a meagre terrified countenance that looks as if he had written for himself, or were resolved to turn author and bring the rest of his brethren into the same condition; and lastly, in the form of a worn-out punk, with verses in her hand, which her vanity had preferred to settlements, without a whole tatter to her tail, but as ragged as one of the Muses; or as if she were carrying her linen to the paper-mill, to be converted into folio books of warning to all young maids, not to prefer poetry to good sense, or lying in the arms of a needy wit, before the embraces of a wealthy fool.

Enter SCANDAL

SCANDAL. What, Jeremy holding forth?

VALENTINE. The rogue has (with all the wit he could muster up) been declaiming against wit.

SCANDAL. Aye? why, then, I'm afraid Jeremy has wit; for wherever it is, it's always contriving its own ruin.

JEREMY. Why, so I have been telling my master, sir. Mr. Scandal, for Heaven's sake, sir, try if you can dissuade him from turning poet.

SCANDAL. Poet! he shall turn soldier first, and rather depend upon the outside of his head than the lining. Why, what the devil! has not your poverty made you enemies enough? must you needs show your wit to get more?

JEREMY. Aye, more indeed; for who cares for anybody that has more wit than himself?

SCANDAL. Jeremy speaks like an oracle. Don't you see how worthless great men and dull, rich rogues avoid a witty man of small fortune? Why, he looks like a writ of inquiry into their titles and estates, and seems commissioned by Heaven to seize the better half.

VALENTINE. Therefore I would rail in my writings, and be revenged.

SCANDAL. Rail? at whom? the whole world? Impotent and vain! Who would die a martyr to sense in a country where the religion is folly? You may stand at bay for a while; but when the full cry is against you, you won't have fair play for your life. If you can't be fairly run down by the hounds, you will be treacherously shot by the huntsmen. No, turn pimp, flatterer, quack, lawyer, parson, be chaplain to an atheist, or stallion to an old woman, anything but poet. A modern poet is worse, more servile, timorous, and fawning, than any I have named—without you could retrieve the ancient honors of the name, recall the stage of Athens, and be allowed the force of open, honest satire.

VALENTINE. You are as inveterate against our poets as if your character had been lately exposed upon the stage.—Nay, I am not violently bent upon the trade.—(*Knocking at the door*) Jeremy, see who's there.—

Exit JEREMY

But tell me what you would have me do. What does the world say of me and my forced confinement?

SCANDAL. The world behaves itself as it uses to do on such occasions: some pity you

and condemn your father; others excuse him and blame you. Only the ladies are merciful and wish you well, since love and pleasurable expense have been your greatest faults.

[*Re-*]*enter* JEREMY

VALENTINE. How now?

JEREMY. Nothing new, sir; I have dispatched some half-a-dozen duns with as much dexterity as a hungry judge does causes at dinner-time.

VALENTINE. What answer have you given 'em?

SCANDAL. Patience, I suppose—the old receipt?

JEREMY. No, faith, sir; I have put 'em off so long with patience and forbearance, and other fair words, that I was forced now to tell 'em in plain downright English—

VALENTINE. What?

JEREMY. That they should be paid.

VALENTINE. When?

JEREMY. To-morrow.

VALENTINE. And how the devil do you mean to keep your word?

JEREMY. Keep it? Not at all; it has been so very much stretched that I reckon it will break of course by to-morrow, and nobody be surprised at the matter.—(*Knocking*) Again!—Sir, if you don't like my negotiation, will you be pleased to answer these yourself?

VALENTINE. See who they are.

Exit JEREMY

—By this, Scandal, you may see what it is to be great; secretaries of state, presidents of the council, and generals of an army lead just such a life as I do; have just such crowds of visitants in a morning, all soliciting of past promises, which are but a civiler sort of duns that lay claim to voluntary debts.

SCANDAL. And you, like a true great man, having engaged their attendance, and promised more than ever you intend to perform, are more perplexed to find evasions than you would be to invent the honest means of keeping your word and gratifying your creditors.

VALENTINE. Scandal, learn to spare your friends, and do not provoke your enemies: this liberty of your tongue will one day bring a confinement on your body, my friend.

Re-enter JEREMY

JEREMY. O sir, there's Trapland the scrivener, with two suspicious fellows like lawful pads,[1] that would knock a man down with pocket-tipstaves[2]—and there's your father's steward, and the nurse with one of your children from Twitnam.[3]

VALENTINE. Pox on her! could she find no other time to fling my sins in my face? Here, give her this (*Gives money*), and bid her trouble me no more—a thoughtless, two-handed whore! She knows my condition well enough, and might have overlaid the child a fortnight ago if she had had any forecast in her.

SCANDAL. What, is it bouncing Margery and my godson?

JEREMY. Yes, sir.

SCANDAL. My blessing to the boy, with this token of my love.—(*Gives money*) And, d'ye hear, bid Margery put more flocks[4] in her bed, shift twice a-week, and not work so hard, that she may not smell so vigorously. I shall take the air shortly.

VALENTINE. Scandal, don't spoil my boy's milk.—(*To* JEREMY) Bid Trapland come in.

Exit JEREMY

If I can give that Cerberus a sop, I shall be at rest for one day.

[*Re-*]*enter* JEREMY [*with*] TRAPLAND

VALENTINE. O Mr. Trapland, my old friend, welcome!—Jeremy, a chair quickly; a bottle of sack and a toast! Fly—a chair first.

TRAPLAND. A good morning to you, Mr. Valentine, and to you, Mr. Scandal.

SCANDAL. The morning's a very good morning, if you don't spoil it.

VALENTINE. Come sit you down; you know his way.

1 highwaymen; here, bailiffs.
2 A staff of office tipped with metal or horn.
3 Twickenham.
4 tufts of wool or cotton.

TRAPLAND. (*Sits*) There is a debt, Mr. Valentine, of fifteen hundred pounds of pretty long standing—

VALENTINE. I cannot talk about business with a thirsty palate.—(*To* JEREMY) Sirrah, the sack! 295

TRAPLAND. And I desire to know what course you have taken for the payment.

VALENTINE. Faith and troth, I am heartily glad to see you: my service to you. (*Drinks*) Fill, fill, to honest Mr. Trapland —fuller! 301

TRAPLAND. Hold, sweetheart; this is not to our business. My service to you, Mr. Scandal. (*Drinks*) I have forborne as long—

VALENTINE. T'other glass, and then we'll talk.—Fill, Jeremy! 306

TRAPLAND. No more, in truth.—I have forborne, I say—

VALENTINE. (*To* JEREMY) Sirrah, fill when I bid you.—(*To* TRAPLAND) And how does your handsome daughter? Come, a good husband to her! (*Drinks*) 312

TRAPLAND. Thank you.—I have been out of this money—

VALENTINE. Drink first.—Scandal, why do you not drink? (*They drink*)

TRAPLAND. And in short, I can be put off no longer. 318

VALENTINE. I was much obliged to you for your supply: it did me signal service in my necessity. But you delight in doing good.—Scandal, drink to me my friend Trapland's health. An honester man lives not, nor one more ready to serve his friend in distress, though I say it to his face. Come, fill each man his glass. 326

SCANDAL. What! I know Trapland has been a whoremaster, and loves a wench still. You never knew a whoremaster that was not an honest fellow. 330

TRAPLAND. Fie, Mr. Scandal! you never knew—

SCANDAL. What, don't I know?—I know the buxom black widow in the Poultry—eight hundred pounds a year jointure, and twenty thousand pounds in money. Aha, old Trap! 337

VALENTINE. Say you so, i'faith? Come, we'll remember the widow. I know whereabouts you are; come, to the widow—

TRAPLAND. No more, indeed. 341

VALENTINE. What, the widow's health.—(*To* JEREMY) Give it him—Off with it. (*They drink*) A lovely girl, i'faith, black sparkling eyes, soft, pouting, ruby lips; better sealing there than a bond for a million, ha!

TRAPLAND. No, no, there's no such thing; we'd better mind our business—you're a wag. 350

VALENTINE. No, faith, we'll mind the widow's business; fill again.—Pretty, round, heaving breasts, a Barbary[1] shape, and a jut with her bum would stir an anchorite—and the prettiest foot! Oh, if a man could but fasten his eyes to her feet, as they steal in and out, and play at bo-peep under her petticoats! ah, Mr. Trapland? 358

TRAPLAND. Verily, give me a glass—you're a wag—and here's to the widow. (*Drinks*)

SCANDAL. (*Aside to* VALENTINE) He begins to chuckle; ply him close, or he'll relapse into a dun. *Exit* JEREMY 363

Enter [SNAP]

SNAP. By your leave, gentlemen.—Mr. Trapland, if we must do our office, tell us. We have half-a-dozen gentlemen to arrest in Pall Mall and Covent Garden, and if we don't make haste, the chairmen will be abroad and block up the chocolate-houses, and then our labor's lost. 370

TRAPLAND. Udso, that's true.—Mr. Valentine, I love mirth, but business must be done; are you ready to—

[*Re-enter* JEREMY]

JEREMY. Sir, your father's steward says he comes to make proposals concerning your debts. 376

VALENTINE. Bid him come in.—Mr. Trapland, send away your officer; you shall have an answer presently.

TRAPLAND. Mr. Snap, stay within call. *Exit* SNAP

[1] Moorish.

Enter Steward, [*who*] *whispers* [*to*] VALENTINE

SCANDAL. Here's a dog now—a traitor in his wine.—(*To* TRAPLAND) Sirrah, refund the sack.—Jeremy, fetch him some water, or I'll rip up his stomach, and go the shortest way to his conscience.

TRAPLAND. Mr. Scandal, you are uncivil; I did not value your sack, but you cannot expect it again when I have drunk it.

SCANDAL. And how do you expect to have your money again when a gentleman has spent it?

VALENTINE. (*To* Steward) You need say no more; I understand the conditions. They are very hard, but my necessity is very pressing; I agree to 'em. Take Mr. Trapland with you, and let him draw the writing.—Mr. Trapland, you know this man; he shall satisfy you.

TRAPLAND. I am loath to be thus pressing, but my necessity—

VALENTINE. No apology, good Mr. Scrivener, you shall be paid.

TRAPLAND. I hope you forgive me; my business requires—

Exeunt TRAPLAND, Steward, *and* JEREMY

SCANDAL. He begs pardon like a hangman at an execution.

VALENTINE. But I have got a reprieve.

SCANDAL. I am surprised; what, does your father relent?

VALENTINE. No; he has sent me the hardest conditions in the world. You have heard of a booby brother of mine that was sent to sea three years ago? This brother my father hears is landed; whereupon he very affectionately sends me word, if I will make a deed of conveyance of my right to his estate after his death to my younger brother, he will immediately furnish me with four thousand pounds to pay my debts and make my fortune. This was once proposed before, and I refused it; but the present impatience of my creditors for their money, and my own impatience of confinement and absence from Angelica, force me to consent.

SCANDAL. A very desperate demonstration of your love to Angelica, and I think she has never given you any assurance of hers.

VALENTINE. You know her temper; she never gave me any great reason either for hope or despair.

SCANDAL. Women of her airy temper, as they seldom think before they act, so they rarely give us any light to guess at what they mean. But you have little reason to believe that a woman of this age, who has had an indifference for you in your prosperity, will fall in love with your ill-fortune; besides, Angelica has a great fortune of her own, and great fortunes either expect another great fortune, or a fool.

Enter JEREMY

JEREMY. More misfortunes, sir.

VALENTINE. What, another dun?

JEREMY. No, sir, but Mr. Tattle is come to wait upon you.

VALENTINE. Well, I can't help it—you must bring him up; he knows I don't go abroad. *Exit* JEREMY

SCANDAL. Pox on him! I'll be gone.

VALENTINE. No, prithee, stay. Tattle and you should never be asunder; you are light and shadow, and show one another. He is perfectly thy reverse both in humor and understanding, and, as you set up for defamation, he is a mender of reputations.

SCANDAL. A mender of reputations! aye, just as he is a keeper of secrets—another virtue that he sets up for in the same manner. For the rogue will speak aloud in the posture of a whisper and deny a woman's name while he gives you the marks of her person: he will forswear receiving a letter from her, and at the same time show you her hand upon the superscription—and yet perhaps he has counterfeited the hand too, and sworn to a truth. But he hopes not to be believed, and refuses the reputation of a lady's favor, as a doctor says *No* to a bishopric, only that it may be granted him. In short, he is a public professor of secrecy, and makes proclamation that he holds private intelligence.—He's here.

Enter TATTLE

TATTLE. Valentine, good morrow; Scandal, I am yours—that is, when you speak well of me.

SCANDAL. That is when I am yours; for while I am my own, or anybody's else, that will never happen.

TATTLE. How inhuman!

VALENTINE. Why, Tattle, you need not be much concerned at anything that he says, for to converse with Scandal, is to play at losing loadum[1]: you must lose a good name to him before you can win it for yourself.

TATTLE. But how barbarous that is, and how unfortunate for him, that the world should think the better of any person for his calumniation!—I thank Heaven, it has always been a part of my character to handle the reputation of others very tenderly.

SCANDAL. Aye, such rotten reputations as you have to deal with are to be handled tenderly indeed.

TATTLE. Nay, but why rotten; why should you say rotten, when you know not the persons of whom you speak? How cruel that is!

SCANDAL. Not know 'em? why, thou never hadst to do with anybody that did not stink to all the town.

TATTLE. Ha! ha! ha! nay, now you make a jest of it, indeed; for there is nothing more known than that nobody knows anything of that nature of me.—As I hope to be saved, Valentine, I never exposed a woman since I knew what woman was.

VALENTINE. And yet you have conversed[2] with several.

TATTLE. To be free with you, I have—I don't care if I own that; nay more (I'm going to say a bold word now), I never could meddle with a woman that had to do with anybody else.

SCANDAL. How!

VALENTINE. Nay, faith, I'm apt to believe him.—Except her husband, Tattle.

TATTLE. Oh, that—

SCANDAL. What think you of that noble commoner Mrs. Drab?

TATTLE. Pooh, I know Madam Drab has made her brags in three or four places, that I said this and that, and writ to her, and did I know not what—but, upon my reputation, she did me wrong.—Well, well, that was malice— but I know the bottom of it. She was bribed to that by one we all know —a man, too—only to bring me into disgrace with a certain woman of quality—

SCANDAL. Whom we all know.

TATTLE. No matter for that.—Yes, yes, everybody knows—no doubt on't, everybody knows my secrets.—But I soon satisfied the lady of my innocence; for I told her—"Madam," says I, "there are some persons who make it their business to tell stories, and say this and that of one and t'other, and everything in the world; and," says I, "if your grace—"

SCANDAL. "Grace!"

TATTLE. O Lord! what have I said? my unlucky tongue!

VALENTINE. Ha! ha! ha!

SCANDAL. Why, Tattle, thou hast more impudence than one can in reason expect: I shall have an esteem for thee. Well, and, ha! ha! ha!—well, go on: and what did you say to her grace?

VALENTINE. I confess this is something extraordinary.

TATTLE. Not a word, as I hope to be saved; an arrant *lapsus linguæ*.—Come, let's talk of something else.

VALENTINE. Well, but how did you acquit yourself?

TATTLE. Pooh! pooh! nothing at all, I only rallied with you—a woman of ordinary rank was a little jealous of me, and I told her something or other, faith—I know not what.—Come, let's talk of something else.

(*Hums a song*)

SCANDAL. Hang him, let him alone; he has a mind we should inquire.

TATTLE. Valentine, I supped last night with your mistress and her uncle, old Foresight; I think your father lies at Foresight's.

VALENTINE. Yes.

[1] A card game in which the loser wins.
[2] With a double meaning.

TATTLE. Upon my soul, Angelica's a fine woman.—And so is Mrs. Foresight, and her sister Mrs. Frail.

SCANDAL. Yes, Mrs. Frail is a very fine woman; we all know her.

TATTLE. Oh, that is not fair!

SCANDAL. What?

TATTLE. To tell.

SCANDAL. To tell what? why, what do you know of Mrs. Frail?

TATTLE. Who, I? Upon honor, I don't know whether she be man or woman but by the smoothness of her chin and roundness of her lips.

SCANDAL. No?

TATTLE. No.

SCANDAL. She says otherwise.

TATTLE. Impossible!

SCANDAL. Yes, faith. Ask Valentine else.

TATTLE. Why then, as I hope to be saved, I believe a woman only obliges a man to secrecy that she may have the pleasure of telling herself.

SCANDAL. No doubt on't. Well, but has she done you wrong, or no? You have had her? ha?

TATTLE. Though I have more honor than to tell first, I have more manners than to contradict what a lady has declared.

SCANDAL. Well, you own it?

TATTLE. I am strangely surprised!—Yes, yes, I can't deny't if she taxes me with it.

SCANDAL. She'll be here by and by; she sees Valentine every morning.

TATTLE. —How?

VALENTINE. She does me the favor, I mean, of a visit sometimes. I did not think she had granted more to anybody.

SCANDAL. Nor I, faith: but Tattle does not use to belie a lady; it is contrary to his character.—How one may be deceived in a woman, Valentine!

TATTLE. Nay, what do you mean, gentlemen?

SCANDAL. I'm resolved I'll ask her.

TATTLE. O barbarous! why, did you not tell me—

SCANDAL. No, you told us.

TATTLE. And bid me ask Valentine.

VALENTINE. What did I say? I hope you won't bring me to confess an answer when you never asked me the question?

TATTLE. But, gentlemen, this is the most inhuman proceeding—

VALENTINE. Nay, if you have known Scandal thus long, and cannot avoid such a palpable decoy as this was, the ladies have a fine time whose reputations are in your keeping.

[*Re-*]*enter* JEREMY

JEREMY. Sir, Mrs. Frail has sent to know if you are stirring.

VALENTINE. Show her up when she comes.

Exit JEREMY

TATTLE. I'll be gone.

VALENTINE. You'll meet her.

TATTLE. Is there not a back way?

VALENTINE. If there were, you have more discretion than to give Scandal such an advantage; why, your running away will prove all that he can tell her.

TATTLE. Scandal, you will not be so ungenerous?—Oh, I shall lose my reputation of secrecy forever!—I shall never be received but upon public days, and my visits will never be admitted beyond a drawing-room. I shall never see a bedchamber again, never be locked in a closet, nor run behind a screen, or under a table; never be distinguished among the waiting-women by the name of "trusty Mr. Tattle" more.—You will not be so cruel.

VALENTINE. Scandal, have pity on him; he'll yield to any conditions.

TATTLE. —Any, any terms!

SCANDAL. Come, then, sacrifice half-a-dozen women of good reputation to me presently.—Come, where are you familiar?—and see that they are women of quality too, the first quality.

TATTLE. 'Tis very hard.—Won't a baronet's lady pass?

SCANDAL. No, nothing under a right honorable.[1]

TATTLE. O inhuman! you don't expect their names?

1 a peeress.

SCANDAL. No, their titles shall serve.

TATTLE. Alas! that's the same thing. Pray, spare me their titles; I'll describe their persons.

SCANDAL. Well, begin then: but take notice, if you are so ill a painter that I cannot know the person by your picture of her, you must be condemned, like other bad painters, to write the name at the bottom.

TATTLE. Well, first then—

Enter MRS. FRAIL

TATTLE. Oh, unfortunate! she's come already. Will you have patience till another time?—I'll double the number.

SCANDAL. Well, on that condition.—Take heed you don't fail me.

MRS. FRAIL. Hey, day! I shall get a fine reputation by coming to see fellows in a morning.—Scandal, you devil, are you here too?—Oh, Mr. Tattle, everything is safe with you, we know.

SCANDAL. Tattle!

TATTLE. Mum.—O madam, you do me too much honor.

VALENTINE. Well, lady galloper, how does Angelica?

MRS. FRAIL. Angelica? manners!

VALENTINE. What, you will allow an absent lover—

MRS. FRAIL. No, I'll allow a lover present with his mistress to be particular—but otherwise I think his passion ought to give place to his manners.

VALENTINE. But what if he has more passion than manners?

MRS. FRAIL. Then let him marry and reform.

VALENTINE. Marriage indeed may qualify the fury of his passion, but it very rarely mends a man's manners.

MRS. FRAIL. You are the most mistaken in the world; there is no creature perfectly civil but a husband. For in a little time he grows only rude to his wife, and that is the highest good breeding, for it begets his civility to other people.—Well, I'll tell you news—but I suppose you hear your brother Benjamin is landed. And my brother Foresight's daughter is come out of the country—I assure you there's a match talked of by the old people.—Well, if he be but as great a sea-beast as she is a land monster, we shall have a most amphibious breed.—The progeny will be all otters; he has been bred at sea, and she has never been out of the country.

VALENTINE. Pox take 'em! their conjunction bodes me no good, I'm sure.

MRS. FRAIL. Now you talk of conjunction, my brother Foresight has cast both their nativities,[1] and prognosticates an admiral and an eminent justice of the peace to be the issue male of their two bodies.—'Tis the most superstitious old fool! He would have persuaded me that this was an unlucky day, and would not let me come abroad; but I invented a dream, and sent him to Artemidorus for interpretation, and so stole out to see you. Well, and what will you give me now? come, I must have something.

VALENTINE. Step into the next room—and I'll give you something.

SCANDAL. Aye, we'll all give you something.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, what will you all give me?

VALENTINE. Mine's a secret.

MRS. FRAIL. I thought you would give me something that would be a trouble to you to keep.

VALENTINE. And Scandal shall give you a good name.

MRS. FRAIL. That's more than he has for himself.—And what will you give me, Mr. Tattle?

TATTLE. I? my soul, madam.

MRS. FRAIL. Pooh, no, I thank you, I have enough to do to take care of my own. Well, but I'll come and see you one of these mornings. I hear you have a great many pictures.

TATTLE. I have a pretty good collection at your service—some originals.

SCANDAL. Hang him, he has nothing but the Seasons and the Twelve Cæsars, paltry copies; and the Five Senses, as ill-represented

[1] To cast a horoscope.

as they are in himself; and he himself is the only original[1] you will see there.

MRS. FRAIL. Aye, but I hear he has a closet of beauties.

SCANDAL. Yes, all that have done him favors if you will believe him.

MRS. FRAIL. Aye, let me see those, Mr. Tattle.

TATTLE. Oh, madam, those are sacred to love and contemplation. No man but the painter and myself was ever blessed with the sight.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, but a woman—

TATTLE. Nor woman, till she consented to have her picture there too—for then she's obliged to keep the secret.

SCANDAL. No, no; come to me if you'd see pictures.

MRS. FRAIL. You?

SCANDAL. Yes, faith, I can show you your own picture and most of your acquaintance to the life, and as like as at Kneller's.

MRS. FRAIL. O lying creature!—Valentine, does not he lie?—I can't believe a word he says.

VALENTINE. No, indeed, he speaks truth now; for as Tattle has pictures of all that have granted him favors, he has the pictures of all that have refused him—if satires, descriptions, characters, and lampoons are pictures.

SCANDAL. Yes, mine are most in black and white; and yet there are some set out in their true colors, both men and women. I can show you pride, folly, affectation, wantonness, inconstancy, covetousness, dissimulation, malice, and ignorance, all in one piece. Then I can show you lying, foppery, vanity, cowardice, bragging, lechery, impotence, and ugliness in another piece; and yet one of these is a celebrated beauty, and t'other a professed beau. I have paintings too, some pleasant enough.

MRS. FRAIL. Come, let's hear 'em.

SCANDAL. Why, I have a beau in a bagnio, cupping[2] for a complexion, and sweating for a shape.

MRS. FRAIL. So.

SCANDAL. Then I have a lady burning of brandy in a cellar with a hackney-coachman.

MRS. FRAIL. O devil!—Well, but that story is not true.

SCANDAL. I have some hieroglyphics[3] too. I have a lawyer with a hundred hands, two heads, and but one face; a divine with two faces, and one head; and I have a soldier with his brains in his belly, and his heart where his head should be.

MRS. FRAIL. And no head?

SCANDAL. No head.

MRS. FRAIL. Pooh, this is all invention. Have you ne'er a poet?

SCANDAL. Yes, I have a poet weighing words and selling praise for praise, and a critic picking his pocket. I have another large piece too, representing a school where there are huge-proportioned critics, with long wigs, laced coats, Steenkirk cravats[4] and terrible faces; with catcalls[5] in their hands, and horn-books[6] about their necks. I have many more of this kind, very well painted as you shall see.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, I'll come, if it be but to disprove you.

[*Re-*]*enter* JEREMY

JEREMY. Sir, here's the steward again from your father.

VALENTINE. I'll come to him.—Will you give me leave? I'll wait on you again presently.

MRS. FRAIL. No, I'll be gone. Come, who squires me to the Exchange[7]? I must call my sister Foresight there.

SCANDAL. I will. I have a mind to your sister.

MRS. FRAIL. Civil!

TATTLE. I will, because I have a *tendre*[8] for your ladyship.

MRS. FRAIL. That's somewhat the better reason, to my opinion.

SCANDAL. Well, if Tattle entertains you, I have the better opportunity to engage your sister.

1 Here, "fool," 2 bleeding.

3 Symbolic pictures.
4 Loose neckcloths; from the battle (1692).
5 Metal whistles.
6 A B C cards covered with horn.
7 A fashionable bazaar in the Strand.
8 An affection.

VALENTINE. Tell Angelica I am about making hard conditions to come abroad and be at liberty to see her.

SCANDAL. I'll give an account of you and your proceedings. If indiscretion be a sign of love, you are the most a lover of anybody that I know: you fancy that parting with your estate will help you to your mistress.—In my mind he is a thoughtless adventurer

Who hopes to purchase wealth by selling land
Or win a mistress with a losing hand.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT II

SCENE I. *A room in* FORESIGHT'S *house*

[*Enter*] FORESIGHT *and* Servant

FORESIGHT. Heyday! What, are all the women of my family abroad? Is not my wife come home, nor my sister, nor my daughter?

SERVANT. No, sir.

FORESIGHT. Mercy on us, what can be the meaning of it? Sure, the moon[1] is in all her fortitudes.[2] Is my niece Angelica at home?

SERVANT. Yes, sir.

FORESIGHT. I believe you lie, sir.

SERVANT. Sir?

FORESIGHT. I say you lie, sir. It is impossible that anything should be as I would have it; for I was born, sir, when the Crab was ascending, and all my affairs go backward.

SERVANT. I can't tell, indeed, sir.

FORESIGHT. No, I know you can't, sir; but I can tell, sir, and foretell, sir.

Enter Nurse

FORESIGHT. Nurse, where's your young mistress?

NURSE. Wee'st heart,[3] I know not; they're none of 'em come home yet. Poor child! I warrant she's fond o' seeing the town; marry, pray Heaven, they ha' given her any dinner.—Good lack-a-day, ha! ha! ha! Oh, strange! I'll vow and swear now—ha! ha! ha! marry, and did you ever see the like?

FORESIGHT. Why, how now, what's the matter?

NURSE. Pray Heaven send your worship good luck! marry and amen with all my heart; for you have put on one stocking with the wrong side outward.

FORESIGHT. Ha, how? faith and troth I'm glad of it!—And so I have; that may be good luck in troth—in troth it may, very good luck; nay, I have had some omens. I got out of bed backwards too this morning, without premeditation—pretty good that, too; but then I stumbled coming downstairs, and met a weasel. Bad omens those. Some bad, some good; our lives are chequered—mirth and sorrow, want and plenty, night and day, make up our time.—But in troth I am pleased at my stocking; very well pleased at my stocking.—Oh, here's my niece!—Sirrah, go tell Sir Sampson Legend I'll wait on him if he's at leisure; 'tis now three o'clock, a very good hour for business. Mercury governs this hour.

[*Exit* Servant]

[*Enter* ANGELICA]

ANGELICA. Is it not a good hour for pleasure too? Uncle, pray lend me your coach; mine's out of order.

FORESIGHT. What, would you be gadding too? sure, all females are mad to-day. It is of evil portent, and bodes mischief to the master of a family.—I remember an old prophecy written by Messahalah, the Arabian, and thus translated by a reverend Buckinghamshire bard:

> When housewives all the house forsake,
> And leave goodman to brew and bake,
> Withouten guile then be it said,
> That house doth stand upon its head;
> And when the head is set in ground,
> Ne mar'l if it be fruitful found.

Fruitful, the head fruitful; that bodes horns—the fruit of the head is horns.—Dear

1 The inconstant planet.
2 Position of highest influence.
3 Woe's my heart.

niece, stay at home; for by the head of the house is meant the husband. The prophecy needs no explanation.

ANGELICA. Well, but I can neither make you a cuckold, uncle, by going abroad, nor secure you from being one by staying at home.

FORESIGHT. Yes, yes; while there's one woman left, the prophecy is not in full force.

ANGELICA. But my inclinations are in force. I have a mind to go abroad; and if you won't lend me your coach, I'll take a hackney, or a chair, and leave you to erect a scheme[1] and find who's in conjunction with your wife. Why don't you keep her at home if you're jealous of her when she's abroad? You know my aunt is a little retrograde (as you call it) in her nature. Uncle, I'm afraid you are not lord of the ascendant, ha! ha! ha!

FORESIGHT. Well, gill-flirt,[2] you are very pert—and always ridiculing that celestial science.

ANGELICA. Nay, uncle, don't be angry; if you are, I'll reap[3] up all your false prophecies, ridiculous dreams, and idle divinations: I'll swear you are a nuisance to the neighborhood.—What a bustle did you keep against the last invisible eclipse, laying in provision as 'twere for a siege! What a world of fire and candle, matches and tinder-boxes did you purchase! One would have thought we were ever after to live underground, or at least making a voyage to Greenland, to inhabit there all the dark season.

FORESIGHT. Why, you malapert slut!

ANGELICA. Will you lend me your coach —or I'll go on.—Nay, I'll declare how you prophesied popery was coming, only because the butler had mislaid some of the apostle spoons,[4] and thought they were lost. Away went religion and spoon-meat[5] together.—Indeed, uncle, I'll indict you for a wizard.

FORESIGHT. How, hussy!—Was there ever such a provoking minx!

NURSE. O merciful Father, how she talks!

ANGELICA. Yes, I can make oath of your unlawful midnight practices; you and the old nurse there—

NURSE. Marry, Heaven defend!—I at midnight practices!—O Lord, what's here to do!—I in unlawful doings with my master's worship!—Why, did you ever hear the like, now?—Sir, did ever I do anything of your midnight concerns—but warm your bed, and tuck you up, and set the candle and your tobacco-box and your urinal by you, and now and then rub the soles of your feet?—O Lord, I?—

ANGELICA. Yes, I saw you together, through the keyhole of the closet, one night, like Saul and the witch of Endor,[6] turning the sieve and shears, and pricking your thumbs to write poor innocent servants' names in blood, about a little nutmeg-grater which she had forgot in the caudle-cup.[7]—Nay, I know something worse, if I would speak of it.

FORESIGHT. I defy you, hussy! but I'll remember this; I'll be revenged on you, cockatrice.[8] I'll hamper you.—You have your fortune in your own hands—but I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will.

ANGELICA. Will you? I care not but all shall out then.—Look to't, nurse; I can bring witness that you have a great unnatural teat under your left arm, and he another; and that you suckle a young devil in the shape of a tabby cat, by turns, I can.

NURSE. A teat! a teat!—I an unnatural teat! Oh, the false, slanderous thing; feel, feel here, if I have anything but like another Christian, or any teats but two that han't given suck this thirty years. (*Crying*)

FORESIGHT. I will have patience, since it is the will of the stars I should be thus tormented.—This is the effect of the malicious conjunctions and oppositions in the third house of my nativity;[9] there the curse of

1 To plan for an astronomical calculation.
2 A wanton or giddy woman. 3 Dial. "rip up."
4 With figures of the twelve apostles; christening gifts. 5 Soft or liquid food.
6 1 Sam., xxviii.
7 Common modes of divination.
8 Implies immorality.
9 Which controls dealings with one's kindred.

kindred was foretold.—But I will have my doors locked up—I'll punish you; not a man shall enter my house.

ANGELICA. Do, uncle, lock 'em up quickly before my aunt comes home; you'll have a letter for alimony to-morrow morning—but let me be gone first, and then let no mankind come near the house, but converse with spirits and the celestial signs, the Bull, and the Ram, and the Goat. Bless me! there are a great many horned beasts among the twelve signs, uncle—but cuckolds go to Heaven.

FORESIGHT. But there's but one virgin among the twelve signs, spitfire—but one virgin.

ANGELICA. Nor there had not been that one, if she had had to do with anything but astrologers, uncle. That makes my aunt go abroad.

FORESIGHT. How? how? is that the reason? Come, you know something: tell me and I'll forgive you; do, good niece.—Come, you shall have my coach and horses—faith and troth you shall.—Does my wife complain? come, I know women tell one another. —She is young and sanguine, has a wanton hazel eye, and was born under Gemini, which may incline her to society; she has a mole upon her lip, with a moist palm, and an open liberality on the mount of Venus.[1]

ANGELICA. Ha! ha! ha!

FORESIGHT. Do you laugh?—Well, gentlewoman, I'll—but come, be a good girl. Don't perplex your poor uncle; tell me. Won't you speak?—Odd, I'll—

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir Sampson is coming down to wait upon you.

ANGELICA. Good-b'w'ye,[2] uncle.—Call me a chair.

Exit Servant

—I'll find out my aunt and tell her she must not come home. *Exit* [ANGELICA]

FORESIGHT. I'm so perplexed and vexed, I am not fit to receive him; I shall scarce recover myself before the hour be past.—Go, nurse, tell Sir Sampson I'm ready to wait on him.

NURSE. Yes, sir. [*Exit* Nurse]

FORESIGHT. Well—why, if I was born to be a cuckold there 's no more to be said—he's here already.

Enter SIR SAMPSON LEGEND *with a paper*

SIR SAMPSON. Nor no more to be done, old boy; that's plain.—Here 'tis; I have it in my hand, old Ptolemy. I'll make the ungracious prodigal know who begat him;—I will, old Nostrodamus. What, I warrant my son thought nothing belonged to a father but forgiveness and affection; no authority, no correction, no arbitrary power; nothing to be done but for him to offend and me to pardon. I warrant you, if he danced till doomsday, he thought I was to pay the piper. Well, but here it is under black and white, *signatum*, *sigillatum*, and *deliberatum*:[3] that as soon as my son Benjamin is arrived, he is to make over to him his right of inheritance. Where 's my daughter that is to be—ha! old Merlin! body o' me, I'm so glad I'm revenged on this undutiful rogue.

FORESIGHT. Odso, let me see; let me see the paper.—Aye, faith and troth, here 'tis, if it will but hold. I wish things were done, and the conveyance made. When was this signed—what hour? Odso, you should have consulted me for the time. Well, but we'll make haste—

SIR SAMPSON. Haste, aye, aye; haste enough. My son Ben will be in town to-night.—I have ordered my lawyer to draw up writings of settlement and jointure—all shall be done to-night. No matter for the time: prithee, Brother Foresight, leave superstition. Pox o' th' time! there 's no time but the time present; there's no more to be said of what 's past, and all that is to come will happen. If the sun shine by day and the stars by night, why, we shall know one another's faces without the help of a candle, and that 's all the stars are good for.

1 All signs of wantonness.
2 Cf. "good-bye."
3 signed, sealed, and delivered.

FORESIGHT. How, how, Sir Sampson? that all? Give me leave to contradict you and tell you, you are ignorant.

SIR SAMPSON. I tell you I am wise; and *sapiens dominabitur astris*;[1] there 's Latin for you to prove it, and an argument to confound your ephemeris.[2]—Ignorant!—I tell you, I have travelled, old Fircu, and know the globe. I have seen the antipodes, where the sun rises at midnight and sets at noonday.

FORESIGHT. But I tell you, I have travelled, and travelled in the celestial spheres—know the signs and the planets, and their houses. Can judge of motions direct and retrograde, of sextiles, quadrates, trines and oppositions, fiery trigons and aquatical trigons.[3] Know whether life shall be long or short, happy or unhappy, whether diseases are curable or incurable; if journeys shall be prosperous, undertakings successful, or goods stolen recovered; I know—

SIR SAMPSON. I know the length of the Emperor of China's foot; have kissed the Great Mogul's[4] slipper, and rid a-hunting upon an elephant with the Cham of Tartary. —Body o' me, I have made a cuckold of a king, and the present majesty of Bantam is the issue of these loins.

FORESIGHT. I know when travellers lie or speak truth, when they don't know it themselves.

SIR SAMPSON. I have known an astrologer made a cuckold in the twinkling of a star; and seen a conjurer that could not keep the devil out of his wife's circle.

FORESIGHT. (*Aside*) What, does he twit me with my wife too? I must be better informed of this.—(*Aloud*) Do you mean my wife, Sir Sampson? Though you made a cuckold of the King of Bantam, yet by the body of the sun—

SIR SAMPSON. By the horns of the moon, you would say, brother Capricorn.

FORESIGHT. Capricorn in your teeth, thou modern Mandeville! Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude! Take back your paper of inheritance; send your son to sea again. I'll wed my daughter to an Egyptian mummy ere she shall incorporate with a contemner of sciences and a defamer of virtue.

SIR SAMPSON. (*Aside*) Body o' me, I have gone too far; I must not provoke honest Albumazar.—(*Aloud*) An Egyptian mummy is an illustrious creature, my trusty hieroglyphic, and may have significations of futurity about him. Odsbud, I would my son were an Egyptian mummy for thy sake. What, thou art not angry for a jest, my good Haly? —I reverence the sun, moon, and stars with all my heart. What, I'll make thee a present of a mummy: now I think on't, body o' me, I have a shoulder of an Egyptian king that I purloined from one of the pyramids, powdered with hieroglyphics; thou shalt have it sent home to thy house, and make an entertainment for all the philomaths and students in physic and astrology in and about London.

FORESIGHT. But what do you know of my wife, Sir Sampson?

SIR SAMPSON. Thy wife is a constellation of virtues; she's the moon, and thou art the man in the moon—nay, she is more illustrious than the moon, for she has her chastity without her inconstancy.—'Sbud, I was but in jest.

Enter JEREMY

SIR SAMPSON. How now, who sent for you? ha! what would you have?

(JEREMY *whispers to* SIR SAMPSON)

FORESIGHT. Nay, if you were but in jest —Who's that fellow? I don't like his physiognomy.

SIR SAMPSON. (*To* JEREMY) My son, sir? —what son, sir? my son Benjamin, hoh?

JEREMY. No, sir; Mr. Valentine, my master.—'Tis the first time he has been abroad since his confinement, and he comes to pay his duty to you.

SIR SAMPSON. Well, sir.

Enter VALENTINE

JEREMY. He is here, sir.

VALENTINE. Your blessing, sir.

1 The wise man shall rule the stars.
2 Astronomical almanac.
3 Common astrological terms.
4 Emperor of Delhi.

SIR SAMPSON. You've had it already, sir. I think I sent it you to-day in a bill of four thousand pounds.—A great deal of money, Brother Foresight.

FORESIGHT. Aye, indeed, Sir Sampson, a great deal of money for a young man; I wonder what he can do with it.

SIR SAMPSON. Body o' me, so do I.—Hark ye, Valentine, if there be too much, refund the superfluity; dost hear, boy?

VALENTINE. Superfluity, sir! it will scarce pay my debts. I hope you will have more indulgence than to oblige me to those hard conditions which my necessity signed to.

SIR SAMPSON. Sir, how, I beseech you, what were you pleased to intimate concerning indulgence?

VALENTINE. Why, sir, that you would not go to the extremity of the conditions, but release me at least from some part.

SIR SAMPSON. Oh, sir, I understand you —that's all, ha?

VALENTINE. Yes, sir, all that I presume to ask; but what you, out of fatherly fondness, will be pleased to add shall be doubly welcome.

SIR SAMPSON. No doubt of it, sweet sir, but your filial piety and my fatherly fondness would fit like two tallies.—Here's a rogue, Brother Foresight, makes a bargain under hand and seal in the morning, and would be released from it in the afternoon! Here's a rogue, dog; here's conscience and honesty! This is your wit now, this is the morality of your wits! You are a wit, and have been a beau, and may be a—why, sirrah, is it not here under hand and seal? Can you deny it?

VALENTINE. Sir, I don't deny it.

SIR SAMPSON. Sirrah, you'll be hanged; I shall live to see you go up Holborn Hill.[1] —Has he not a rogue's face?—Speak, brother, you understand physiognomy—a hanging look to me; of all my boys the most unlike me. He has a damned Tyburn-face, without the benefit o' the clergy.

FORESIGHT. Hum—truly I don't care to discourage a young man. He has a violent death in his face, but I hope no danger of hanging.

VALENTINE. Sir, is this usage for your son?—for that old weather-headed fool, I know how to laugh at him; but you, sir—

SIR SAMPSON. You, sir; and you, sir—why, who are you, sir?

VALENTINE. Your son, sir.

SIR SAMPSON. That's more than I know, sir, and I believe not.

VALENTINE. Faith, I hope not.

SIR SAMPSON. What, would you have your mother a whore!—Did you ever hear the like! did you ever hear the like! Body o' me—

VALENTINE. I would have an excuse for your barbarity and unnatural usage.

SIR SAMPSON. Excuse? Impudence! Why, sirrah, mayn't I do what I please? Are not you my slave? Did not I beget you? And might not I have chosen whether I would have begot you or no? Oons! who are you? whence came you? what brought you into the world? how came you here, sir?—here, to stand here, upon those two legs, and look erect with that audacious face, hah? Answer me that! Did you come a volunteer into the world? Or did I beat up for you with the lawful authority of a parent, and press you to the service?

VALENTINE. I know no more why I came than you do why you called me. But here I am, and if you don't mean to provide for me, I desire you would leave me as you found me.

SIR SAMPSON. With all my heart: come, uncase, strip, and go naked out of the world as you came into't.

VALENTINE. My clothes are soon put off; but you must also divest me of reason, thought, passions, inclinations, affections, appetites, senses, and the huge train of attendants that you begot along with me.

SIR SAMPSON. Body o' me, what a many-headed monster have I propagated!

VALENTINE. I am of myself a plain, easy, simple creature, and to be kept at small expense, but the retinue that you gave me are craving and invincible. They are so many

[1] From Newgate to Tyburn.

devils that you have raised, and will have employment.

SIR SAMPSON. Oons, what had I to do to get children!—can't a private man be born without all these followers?—Why, nothing under an emperor should be born with appetites.—Why, at this rate, a fellow that has but a groat in his pocket, may have a stomach capable of a ten-shilling ordinary.[1]

JEREMY. Nay, that's as clear as the sun; I'll make oath of it before any justice in Middlesex.

SIR SAMPSON. Here's a cormorant too.—'S'heart, this fellow was not born with you—I did not beget him, did I?

JEREMY. By the provision that's made for me, you might have begot me too—nay, and to tell your worship another truth, I believe you did, for I find I was born with those same whoreson appetites too that my master speaks of.

SIR SAMPSON. Why, look you there now—I'll maintain it, that by the rule of right reason this fellow ought to have been born without a palate.—'S'heart, what should he do with a distinguishing taste?—I warrant now he'd rather eat a pheasant than a piece of poor John.[2] And smell now—why, I warrant he can smell, and loves perfumes above a stink.—Why, there's it; and music—don't you love music, scoundrel?

JEREMY. Yes, I have a reasonable good ear, sir, as to jigs and country dances, and the like. I don't much matter your solos or sonatas; they give me the spleen.[3]

SIR SAMPSON. The spleen? Ha! ha! ha! A pox confound you!—solos or sonatas? Oons, whose son are you? How were you engendered, muckworm?

JEREMY. I am by my father the son of a chairman; my mother sold oysters in winter and cucumbers in summer; and I came upstairs into the world, for I was born in a cellar.

FORESIGHT. By your looks, you should go upstairs[4] out of the world too, friend.

SIR SAMPSON. And if this rogue were anatomized now, and dissected, he has his vessels of digestion and concoction, and so forth, large enough for the inside of a cardinal, this son of a cucumber!—These things are unaccountable and unreasonable.—Body o' me, why was not I a bear, that my cubs might have lived upon sucking their paws? Nature has been provident only to bears and spiders; the one has its nutriment in his own hands, and t'other spins his habitation out of his own entrails.

VALENTINE. Fortune was provident enough to supply all the necessities of my nature if I had my right of inheritance.

SIR SAMPSON. Again! Oons, han't you four thousand pounds?—If I had it again, I would not give thee a groat.—What, wouldst thou have me turn pelican, and feed thee out of my own vitals?—'S'heart, live by your wits—you were always fond of the wits: now let's see if you have wit enough to keep yourself.—Your brother will be in town to-night or to-morrow morning, and then look you, perform covenants[5]—and so your friend and servant.—Come, Brother Foresight.

Exeunt SIR SAMPSON *and* FORESIGHT

JEREMY. I told you what your visit would come to.

VALENTINE. 'Tis as much as I expected.—I did not come to see him: I came to Angelica. But since she was gone abroad, it was easily turned another way and at least looked well on my side.—What's here? Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail; they are earnest.—I'll avoid 'em.—Come; this way, and go and inquire when Angelica will return.

Exeunt

[*Enter*] MRS. FORESIGHT *and* MRS. FRAIL

MRS. FRAIL. What have you to do to watch me? 'Slife, I'll do what I please.

MRS. FORESIGHT. You will?

MRS. FRAIL. Yes, marry will I.—A great piece of business to go to Covent Garden Square in a hackney-coach, and take a turn with one's friend!

MRS. FORESIGHT. Nay, two or three turns, I'll take my oath.

1 tavern.
2 dried fish.
3 make me morose.
4 up the gallows.
5 keep your promises.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, what if I took twenty?—I warrant if you had been there, it had been only innocent recreation.—Lord, where's the comfort of this life if we can't have the happiness of conversing where we like?

MRS. FORESIGHT. But can't you converse at home?—I own it, I think there is no happiness like conversing with an agreeable man; I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your conversation was very innocent. But the place is public, and to be seen with a man in a hackney-coach is scandalous: what if anybody else should have seen you alight, as I did?—How can anybody be happy while they're in perpetual fear of being seen and censured?—Besides, it would not only reflect upon you, sister, but me.

MRS. FRAIL. Pooh, here's a clutter!—Why should it reflect upon you?—I don't doubt but you have thought yourself happy in a hackney-coach before now.—If I had gone to Knightsbridge, or to Chelsea, or to Spring Garden, or Barn Elms, with a man, alone, something might have been said.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Why, was I ever in any of those places? what do you mean, sister?

MRS. FRAIL. Was I? what do you mean?

MRS. FORESIGHT. You have been at a worse place.

MRS. FRAIL. I at a worse place, and with a man?

MRS. FORESIGHT. I suppose you would not go alone to the World's End.

MRS. FRAIL. The world's end! what, do you mean to banter me?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Poor innocent! you don't know that there's a place called the World's End? I'll swear you can keep your countenance purely[1]; you'd make an admirable player.

MRS. FRAIL. I'll swear you have a great deal of confidence, and in my mind too much for the stage.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Very well, that will appear who has most; you never were at the World's End?

MRS. FRAIL. No.

[1] excellently.

MRS. FORESIGHT. You deny it positively to my face?

MRS. FRAIL. Your face! what's your face?

MRS. FORESIGHT. No matter for that, it's as good a face as yours.

MRS. FRAIL. Not by a dozen years' wearing.—But I do deny it positively to your face then.

MRS. FORESIGHT. I'll allow you now to find fault with my face—for I'll swear your impudence has put me out of countenance.—But look you here now—where did you lose this gold bodkin?—O sister, sister!

MRS. FRAIL. My bodkin?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Nay, 'tis yours; look at it.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, if you go to that, where did you find this bodkin?—O sister, sister!—sister every way.

MRS. FORESIGHT. (*Aside*) Oh, devil on't, that I could not discover her without betraying myself!

MRS. FRAIL. I have heard gentlemen say, sister, that one should take great care when one makes a thrust in fencing, not to lie open one's self.

MRS. FORESIGHT. It's very true, sister; well, since all's out, and as you say, since we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in duels—take care of one another, and grow better friends than before.

MRS. FRAIL. With all my heart: ours are but slight flesh wounds, and if we keep 'em from air, not at all dangerous. Well, give me your hand in token of sisterly secrecy and affection.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Here 'tis, with all my heart.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, as an earnest of friendship and confidence, I'll acquaint you with a design that I have. To tell truth and speak openly one to another, I'm afraid the world have observed us more than we have observed one another. You have a rich husband, and are provided for; I am at a loss, and have no great stock either of fortune or reputation, and therefore must look sharply about me. Sir Sampson has a son that is expected to-night, and by the account I have

heard of his education, can be no conjurer. The estate you know is to be made over to him—now if I could wheedle him, sister, ha? You understand me? 628

MRS. FORESIGHT. I do; and will help you to the utmost of my power.—And I can tell you one thing that falls out luckily enough; my awkward daughter-in-law, who you know is designed to be his wife, is grown fond of Mr. Tattle. Now, if we can improve that and make her have an aversion for the booby, it may go a great way towards his liking you. Here they come together, and let us contrive some way or other to leave 'em together. 639

Enter TATTLE *and* MISS PRUE

PRUE. Mother, mother, mother, look you here!

MRS. FORESIGHT. Fie, fie, miss! how you bawl.—Besides, I have told you, you must not call me mother. 644

PRUE. What must I call you then? Are you not my father's wife?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Madam—you must say madam.—By my soul, I shall fancy myself old, indeed, to have this great girl call me mother!—Well, but miss, what are you so overjoyed at? 651

PRUE. Look you here, madam, then, what Mr. Tattle has given me.—Look you here, cousin, here's a snuffbox; nay, there's snuff in't—here, will you have any?—Oh, good! how sweet it is.—Mr. Tattle is all over sweet; his peruke is sweet, and his gloves are sweet, and his handkerchief is sweet—pure sweet, sweeter than roses.—Smell him, mother—madam, I mean. He gave me this ring for a kiss. 661

TATTLE. Oh, fie, miss! you must not kiss and tell.

PRUE. Yes, I may tell my mother.—And he says he'll give me something to make me smell so—(*To* TATTLE) Oh, pray lend me your handkerchief.—Smell, cousin; he says he'll give me something that will make my smocks smell this way.—Is not it pure[1]?—It's better than lavender, mun.[2] I'm resolved I won't let nurse put any more lavender among my smocks—ha, cousin? 672

MRS. FRAIL. Fie, miss! amongst your linen, you must say—you must never say smock.

PRUE. Why, it is not bawdy, is it, cousin?

TATTLE. Oh, madam, you are too severe upon miss. You must not find fault with her pretty simplicity; it becomes her strangely.—Pretty miss, don't let 'em persuade you out of your innocency. 680

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, demn! You toad!—I wish you don't persuade her out of her innocency.

TATTLE. Who? I, madam?—O Lord, how can your ladyship have such a thought—sure, you don't know me! 686

MRS. FRAIL. Ah, devil! sly devil!—He's as close, sister, as a confessor.—He thinks we don't observe him.

MRS. FORESIGHT. A cunning cur! How soon he could find out a fresh, harmless creature! and left us, sister, presently.

TATTLE. Upon reputation— 693

MRS. FORESIGHT. They're all so, sister, these men: they love to have the spoiling of a young thing; they are as fond of it as of being first in the fashion, or of seeing a new play the first day.—I warrant it would break Mr. Tattle's heart to think that anybody else should be beforehand with him. 700

TATTLE. O Lord, I swear I would not for the world—

MRS. FRAIL. Oh, hang you! who'll believe you?—You'd be hanged before you'd confess—we know you—she's very pretty!—Lord, what pure red and white!—she looks so wholesome—ne'er stir; I don't know, but I fancy, if I were a man— 708

PRUE. How you love to jeer one, cousin!

MRS. FORESIGHT. Heark'ee, sister.—By my soul the girl is spoiled already—d'ye think she'll ever endure a great lubberly tarpaulin?—Gad, I warrant you, she won't let him come near her, after Mr. Tattle. 714

MRS. FRAIL. O' my soul, I'm afraid not—eh!—filthy creature, that smells all of pitch and tar.—[*To* TATTLE] Devil take you, you confounded toad!—Why did you see her before she was married? 719

[1] excellent. [2] man.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Nay, why did we let him?—My husband will hang us; he'll think we brought 'em acquainted.

MRS. FRAIL. Come; faith, let us be gone.—If my brother Foresight should find us with them, he'd think so, sure enough.

MRS. FORESIGHT. So he would—but then, leaving 'em together is as bad.—And he's such a sly devil, he'll never miss an opportunity.

MRS. FRAIL. I don't care; I won't be seen in't.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Well, if you should, Mr. Tattle, you'll have a world to answer for; remember, I wash my hands of it. I'm thoroughly innocent.

Exeunt MRS. FORESIGHT *and* MRS. FRAIL

PRUE. What makes 'em go away, Mr. Tattle? What do they mean, do you know?

TATTLE. Yes, my dear—I think I can guess; but hang me if I know the reason of it.

PRUE. Come, must not we go too?

TATTLE. No, no, they don't mean that.

PRUE. No? What then? What shall you and I do together?

TATTLE. I must make love to you, pretty miss; will you let me make love to you?

PRUE. Yes, if you please.

TATTLE. (*Aside*) Frank, egad, at least. What a pox does Mrs. Foresight mean by this civility? Is it to make a fool of me? Or does she leave us together out of good morality, and do as she would be done by?—Gad, I'll understand it so.

PRUE. Well, and how will you make love to me? Come, I long to have you begin. Must I make love too? You must tell me how.

TATTLE. You must let me speak, miss; you must not speak first. I must ask you questions, and you must answer.

PRUE. What, is it like the catechism?—Come, then, ask me.

TATTLE. D'ye think you can love me?

PRUE. Yes.

TATTLE. Pooh! pox! You must not say yes already; I shan't care a farthing for you then, in a twinkling.

PRUE. What must I say, then?

TATTLE. Why, you must say no, or you believe not, or you can't tell.

PRUE. Why, must I tell a lie then?

TATTLE. Yes, if you'd be well-bred; all well-bred persons lie. Besides, you are a woman; you must never speak what you think. Your words must contradict your thoughts, but your actions may contradict your words. So, when I ask you if you can love me, you must say no, but you must love me too. If I tell you you are handsome, you must deny it and say I flatter you. But you must think yourself more charming than I speak you, and like me for the beauty which I say you have, as much as if I had it myself. If I ask you to kiss me, you must be angry, but you must not refuse me. If I ask you for more, you must be more angry—but more complying; and as soon as ever I make you say you'll cry out, you must be sure to hold your tongue.

PRUE. O Lord, I swear this is pure!—I like it better than our old-fashioned country way of speaking one's mind—and must not you lie too?

TATTLE. Hum!—yes; but you must believe I speak truth.

PRUE. O Gemini! Well, I always had a great mind to tell lies, but they frighted me, and said it was a sin.

TATTLE. Well, my pretty creature, will you make me happy by giving me a kiss?

PRUE. No, indeed; I'm angry at you.
(*Runs and kisses him*)

TATTLE. Hold, hold! That's pretty well—but you should not have given it me, but have suffered me to have taken it.

PRUE. Well, we'll do it again.

TATTLE. With all my heart.—Now then, my little angel! (*Kisses her*)

PRUE. Pish!

TATTLE. That's right—again, my charmer!
(*Kisses her again*)

PRUE. O fie! Nay, now I can't abide you.

TATTLE. Admirable! That was as well as if you had been born and bred in Covent Garden all the days of your life. And won't you show me, pretty miss, where your bedchamber is?

PRUE. No, indeed, won't I; but I'll run there and hide myself from you behind the curtains.

TATTLE. I'll follow you.

PRUE. Ah, but I'll hold the door with both hands, and be angry—and you shall push me down before you come in.

TATTLE. No, I'll come in first, and push you down afterwards.

PRUE. Will you? Then I'll be more angry, and more complying.

TATTLE. Then I'll make you cry out.

PRUE. Oh, but you shan't, for I'll hold my tongue.

TATTLE. Oh, my dear apt scholar!

PRUE. Well, now I'll run, and make more haste than you.

TATTLE. You shall not fly so fast as I'll pursue. *Exeunt*

ACT III

SCENE I. [*The gallery adjoining* PRUE'S *bedchamber*]

Enter Nurse

NURSE. Miss! miss! Miss Prue!—Mercy on me, marry and amen!—Why, what's become of the child? Why, miss! Miss Foresight!—Sure, she has locked herself up in her chamber, and gone to sleep, or to prayers. —Miss! miss!—I hear her! Come to your father, child; open the door—open the door, miss!—I hear you cry "Hush!"—O Lord, who's there?—(*Peeps through the keyhole*) —What's here to do?—O the father! a man with her!—Why, miss, I say! God's my life, here's fine doings towards!—O Lord, we're all undone!—Oh, you young harlotry! —(*Knocks*) Od's my life! won't you open the door?—I'll come in the back way. *Exit*

TATTLE *and* MISS PRUE *at the door*

PRUE. O Lord, she's coming!—and she'll tell my father. What shall I do now!

TATTLE. Pox take her!—if she had stayed two minutes longer, I should have wished for her coming.

PRUE. Oh, dear, what shall I say? Tell me, Mr. Tattle, tell me a lie.

TATTLE. There's no occasion for a lie; I could never tell a lie to no purpose. But since we have done nothing, we must say nothing, I think. I hear her; I'll leave you together, and come off as you can.

(*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door*)

[SCENE II. *A room in* FORESIGHT'S *house*]

[*Enter*] VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *and* ANGELICA

ANGELICA. You can't accuse me of inconstancy; I never told you that I loved you.

VALENTINE. But I can accuse you of uncertainty for not telling me whether you did or not.

ANGELICA. You mistake indifference for uncertainty; I never had concern enough to ask myself the question.

SCANDAL. Nor good nature enough to answer him that did ask you; I'll say that for you, madam.

ANGELICA. What, are you setting up for good nature?

SCANDAL. Only for the affectation of it, as the women do for ill nature.

ANGELICA. Persuade your friend that it is all affectation.

VALENTINE. I shall receive no benefit from the opinion; for I know no effectual difference between continued affectation and reality.

[*Enter* TATTLE *at a distance*]

TATTLE. (*Coming up. Aside to* SCANDAL) Scandal, are you in private discourse? anything of secrecy?

SCANDAL. Yes, but I dare trust you. We were talking of Angelica's love for Valentine; you won't speak of it?

TATTLE. No, no, not a syllable. I know that's a secret, for it's whispered everywhere.

SCANDAL. Ha! ha! ha!

ANGELICA. What is, Mr. Tattle? I heard you say something was whispered everywhere.

SCANDAL. Your love of Valentine.

ANGELICA. How!

TATTLE. No, madam, his love for your ladyship.—Gad take me, I beg your pardon—for I never heard a word of your ladyship's passion till this instant.

ANGELICA. My passion! And who told you of my passion, pray, sir?

SCANDAL. (*Aside to* TATTLE) Why, is the devil in you? Did not I tell it you for a secret?

TATTLE. (*Aside to* SCANDAL) Gad so, but I thought she might have been trusted with her own affairs.

SCANDAL. Is that your discretion? Trust a woman with herself?

TATTLE. You say true. I beg your pardon—I'll bring all off.—(*Aloud*) It was impossible, madam, for me to imagine that a person of your ladyship's wit and gallantry could have so long received the passionate addresses of the accomplished Valentine, and yet remain insensible; therefore you will pardon me if, from a just weight of his merit with your ladyship's good judgment, I formed the balance of a reciprocal affection.

VALENTINE. Oh, the devil! What damned costive poet has given thee this lesson of fustian to get by rote?

ANGELICA. I dare swear you wrong him. It is his own, and Mr. Tattle only judges of the success of others from the effects of his own merit—for certainly Mr. Tattle was never denied anything in his life.

TATTLE. O Lord! Yes, indeed, madam, several times.

ANGELICA. I swear, I don't think 'tis possible.

TATTLE. Yes, I vow and swear I have. Lord, madam, I'm the most unfortunate man in the world, and the most cruelly used by the ladies.

ANGELICA. Nay, now you are ungrateful.

TATTLE. No, I hope not: 'tis as much ingratitude to own some favors as to conceal others.

VALENTINE. There, now it's out.

ANGELICA. I don't understand you now. I thought you had never asked anything but what a lady might modestly grant, and you confess.

SCANDAL. So, faith, your business is done here; now you may go brag somewhere else.

TATTLE. Brag? Oh, heavens! Why, did I name anybody?

ANGELICA. No, I suppose that is not in your power: but you would if you could, no doubt on't.

TATTLE. Not in my power, madam! what, does your ladyship mean that I have no woman's reputation in my power?

SCANDAL. (*Aside to* TATTLE) Oons, why, you won't own it, will you?

TATTLE. Faith, madam, you're in the right. No more I have, as I hope to be saved; I never had it in my power to say anything to a lady's prejudice in my life. For, as I was telling you, madam, I have been the most unsuccessful creature living, in things of that nature, and never had the good fortune to be trusted once with a lady's secret—not once.

ANGELICA. No?

VALENTINE. Not once; I dare answer for him.

SCANDAL. And I'll answer for him; for I'm sure if he had, he would have told me.—I find, madam, you don't know Mr. Tattle.

TATTLE. No, indeed, madam, you don't know me at all, I find. For sure my intimate friends would have known—

ANGELICA. Then it seems you would have told if you had been trusted.

TATTLE. O pox, Scandal! that was too far put.—Never have told particulars, madam. Perhaps I might have talked as of a third person, or have introduced an amour of my own, in conversation, by way of novel; but never have explained particulars.

ANGELICA. But whence comes the reputation of Mr. Tattle's secrecy if he was never trusted?

SCANDAL. Why, thence it arises: the thing is proverbially spoken, but may be applied to him.—As if we should say in general terms, "He only is secret who never was trusted"—a satirical proverb upon our sex. There's another upon yours, as "She is

chaste who was never asked the question." That's all.

VALENTINE. A couple of very civil proverbs, truly. 'Tis hard to tell whether the lady or Mr. Tattle be the more obliged to you; for you found her virtue upon the backwardness of the men, and his secrecy upon the mistrust of the women.

TATTLE. Gad, it's very true, madam, I think we are obliged to acquit ourselves; and for my part—but your ladyship is to speak first.

ANGELICA. Am I? well, I freely confess I have resisted a great deal of temptation.

TATTLE. And, egad, I have given some temptation that has not been resisted.

VALENTINE. Good!

ANGELICA. I cite Valentine here to declare to the court how fruitless he has found his endeavors, and to confess all his solicitations and my denials.

VALENTINE. I am ready to plead not guilty for you, and guilty for myself.

SCANDAL. So! Why, this is fair; here's demonstration with a witness!

TATTLE. Well, my witnesses are not present. But I confess I have had favors from persons—but as the favors are numberless, so the persons are nameless.

SCANDAL. Pooh! pox, this proves nothing.

TATTLE. No? I can show letters, lockets, pictures, and rings; and if there be occasion for witnesses, I can summon the maids at the chocolate-houses, all the porters of Pall Mall and Covent Garden, the door-keepers at the playhouse, the drawers at Locket's, Pontac's, the Rummer,[1] Spring Garden; my own landlady, and valet de chambre—all who shall make oath that I receive more letters than the Secretary's Office; and that I have more vizor-masks to inquire for me than ever went to see the Hermaphrodite, or the Naked Prince. And it is notorious, that in a country church once, an inquiry being made who I was, it was answered, I was the famous Tattle, who had ruined so many women.

VALENTINE. It was there, I suppose, you got the nickname of the Great Turk.

1 Popular taverns.

TATTLE. True, I was called Turk-Tattle all over the parish.—The next Sunday all the old women kept their daughters at home, and the parson had not half his congregation. He would have brought me into the spiritual court, but I was revenged upon him; for he had a handsome daughter, whom I initiated into the science. But I repented it afterwards, for it was talked of in town; and a lady of quality, that shall be nameless, in a raging fit of jealousy, came down in her coach and six horses and exposed herself upon my account. Gad, I was sorry for it with all my heart.—You know whom I mean—you know where we raffled—

SCANDAL. Mum, Tattle.

VALENTINE. 'Sdeath, are not you ashamed?

ANGELICA. Oh, barbarous! I never heard so insolent a piece of vanity.—Fie, Mr. Tattle!—I'll swear I could not have believed it.—Is this your secrecy?

TATTLE. Gad so, the heat of my story carried me beyond my discretion, as the heat of the lady's passion hurried her beyond her reputation.—But I hope you don't know whom I mean; for there were a great many ladies raffled.—Pox on't! now could I bite off my tongue.

SCANDAL. No doubt. [Don't;] for then you'll tell us no more.—Come, I'll recommend a song to you upon the hint of my two proverbs, and I see one in the next room that will sing it. [*Goes to the door*]

TATTLE. For Heaven 's sake, if you do guess, say nothing; gad, I'm very unfortunate.

Re-enter SCANDAL *with one to sing*

SCANDAL. Pray, sing the first song in the last new play.

SONG

(Set by Mr John Eccles)

A nymph and a swain to Apollo once prayed,
The swain had been jilted, the nymph been betrayed:
Their intent was to try if his oracle knew
E'er a nymph that was chaste, or a swain that was true.

Apollo was mute, and had like t'have been posed,
But sagely at length he this secret disclosed:
"He alone won't betray in whom none will confide:
And the nymph may be chaste that has never been tried."

Exit Singer

Enter Sir Sampson, Mrs. Frail, Miss Prue, *and* Servant

Sir Sampson. Is Ben come? odso, my son Ben come? Odd, I'm glad on't; where is he? I long to see him.—Now, Mrs. Frail, you shall see my son Ben.—Body o' me, he's the hopes of my family.—I han't seen him these three years.—I warrant he's grown.—Call him in; bid him make haste.—

Exit Servant

I'm ready to cry for joy.

Mrs. Frail. Now, miss, you shall see your husband.

Prue. (*Aside to* Mrs. Frail) Pish, he shall be none of my husband.

Mrs. Frail. (*Aside to* Prue) Hush! Well, he shan't; leave that to me.—I'll beckon Mr. Tattle to us.

Angelica. Won't you stay and see your brother?

Valentine. We are the twin-stars, and cannot shine in one sphere; when he rises I must set. Besides, if I should stay, I don't know but my father in good nature may press me to the immediate signing the deed of conveyance of my estate, and I'll defer it as long as I can.—Well, you'll come to a resolution[1]?

Angelica. I can't. Resolution must come to me, or I shall never have one.

Scandal. Come, Valentine, I'll go with you; I've something in my head to communicate to you.

Exeunt Valentine *and* Scandal

Sir Sampson. What, is my son Valentine gone? what, is he sneaked off, and would not see his brother? There's an unnatural whelp! there's an ill-natured dog!—What, were you here too, madam, and could not keep him? could neither love, nor duty, nor natural affection, oblige him? Odsbud, madam, have no more to say to him; he is not worth your consideration. The rogue has not a drachm of generous love about him—all interest, all interest. He's an undone scoundrel, and courts your estate. Body o' me, he does not care a doit for your person!

Angelica. I'm pretty even with him, Sir Sampson; for if ever I could have liked anything in him, it should have been his estate, too. But since that's gone, that bait's off and the naked hook appears.

Sir Sampson. Odsbud, well spoken, and you are a wiser woman than I thought you were; for most young women nowadays are to be tempted with a naked hook.

Angelica. If I marry, Sir Sampson, I'm for a good estate with any man, and for any man with a good estate; therefore, if I were obliged to make a choice, I declare I'd rather have you than your son.

Sir Sampson. Faith and troth, you're a wise woman, and I'm glad to hear you say so. I was afraid you were in love with the reprobate; odd, I was sorry for you with all my heart. Hang him, mongrel; cast him off; you shall see the rogue show himself, and make love to some desponding Cadua of four-score for sustenance. Odd, I love to see a young spendthrift forced to cling to an old woman for support, like ivy round a dead oak: faith, I do. I love to see 'em hug and cotton together, like down upon a thistle.

Enter Ben Legend *and* Servant

Ben. Where's father?

Servant. There, sir; his back's toward you.

Sir Sampson. My son Ben! Bless thee, my dear boy; body o' me, thou art heartily welcome.

Ben. Thank you, father, and I'm glad to see you.

Sir Sampson. Odsbud, and I am glad to see thee! Kiss me, boy; kiss me again and again, dear Ben.

(*Kisses him*)

Ben. So, so! Enough, father.—Mess,[2] I'd rather kiss these gentlewomen.

[1] decision.

[2] by the mass.

SIR SAMPSON. And so thou shalt.—Mrs. Angelica, my son Ben.

BEN. Forsooth, an you please.—(*Salutes her*) Nay, mistress, I'm not for dropping anchor here; about ship i'faith.—(*Kisses* MRS. FRAIL) Nay, and you, too, my little cock-boat—so. (*Kisses* MISS PRUE)

TATTLE. Sir, you're welcome ashore.

BEN. Thank you, thank you, friend.

SIR SAMPSON. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

BEN. Ey, ey, been! been far enough, an that be all.—Well, father, and how do all at home? How does brother Dick, and brother Val?

SIR SAMPSON. Dick? Body o' me, Dick has been dead these two years! I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

BEN. Mess, and that's true; marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you say.—Well, and how? I have many questions to ask you. Well, you ben't married again, father, be you?

SIR SAMPSON. No, I intend you shall marry, Ben; I would not marry, for thy sake.

BEN. Nay, what does that signify?—An you marry again—why, then, I'll go to sea again, so there's one for t'other, an that be all.—Pray don't let me be your hindrance; e'en marry, a' God's name, an the wind sit that way. As for my part, mayhap I have no mind to marry.

MRS. FRAIL. That would be a pity, such a handsome young gentleman.

BEN. Handsome! he! he! he! Nay, forsooth, an you be for joking, I'll joke with you; for I love my jest an the ship were sinking, as we say'n at sea. But I'll tell you why I don't much stand toward matrimony. I love to roam about from port to port, and from land to land. I could never abide to be port-bound, as we call it; now, a man that is married has, as it were, d'ye see, his feet in the bilboes,[1] and mayhap mayn't get 'em out again when he would.

SIR SAMPSON. Ben's a wag.

BEN. A man that is married, d'ye see, is no more like another man than a galley-slave is like one of us free sailors; he is chained to an oar all his life, and mayhap forced to tug a leaky vessel into the bargain.

SIR SAMPSON. A very wag! Ben's a very wag!—only a little rough; he wants a little polishing.

MRS. FRAIL. Not at all. I like his humor mightily; it's plain and honest. I should like such a humor in a husband extremely.

BEN. Say'n you so, forsooth? Marry, and I should like such a handsome gentlewoman for a bedfellow, hugely; how say you, mistress, would you like going to sea? Mess, you're a tight vessel! and well rigged, an you were but as well manned.

MRS. FRAIL. I should not doubt that if you were master of me.

BEN. But I'll tell you one thing, an you come to sea in a high wind, or that,[2] lady—you mayn't carry so much sail o' your head.—Top and topgallant, by the mess.

MRS. FRAIL. No? Why so?

BEN. Why, an you do, you may run the risk to be overset, and then you'll carry your keels above water, he! he! he!

ANGELICA. I swear, Mr. Benjamin is the veriest wag in nature—an absolute sea-wit.

SIR SAMPSON. Nay, Ben has parts, but, as I told you before, they want a little polishing. You must not take anything ill, madam.

BEN. No, I hope the gentlewoman is not angry. I mean all in good part; for if I give a jest I'll take a jest: and so, forsooth, you may be as free with me.

ANGELICA. I thank you, sir, I am not at all offended.—But methinks, Sir Sampson, you should leave him alone with his mistress.—Mr. Tattle, we must not hinder lovers.

TATTLE. (*Aside to* MISS PRUE) Well, miss, I have your promise.

SIR SAMPSON. Body o' me, madam, you say true.—Look you, Ben, this is your mistress.—Come, miss, you must not be shamefaced; we'll leave you together.

PRUE. I can't abide to be left alone; mayn't my cousin stay with me?

SIR SAMPSON. No, no.—Come, let's away.

BEN. Look you, father, mayhap the young woman mayn't take a liking to me.

1 shackles.

2 for that matter.

SIR SAMPSON. I warrant thee, boy; come, come, we'll be gone. I'll venture that.

Exeunt SIR SAMPSON, ANGELICA, TATTLE, *and* MRS. FRAIL

BEN. Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? For an you stand astern a that'n,[1] we shall never grapple together.—Come, I'll haul a chair; there, an you please to sit I'll sit by you.

PRUE. You need not sit so near one. If you have anything to say, I can hear you farther off; I an't deaf.

BEN. Why, that's true, as you say. Nor I an't dumb; I can be heard as far as another—I'll heave off to please you.—(*Sits farther off*) An we were a league asunder, I'd undertake to hold discourse with you—an 'twere not a main high wind, indeed, and full in my teeth. Look you, forsooth; I am, as it were, bound for the land of matrimony. 'Tis a voyage, d'ye see, that was none of my seeking. I was commanded by father, and, if you like of it, mayhap I may steer into your harbor. How say you, mistress? The short of the thing is, that if you like me, and I like you, we may chance to swing in a hammock together.

PRUE. I don't know what to say to you, nor I don't care to speak with you at all.

BEN. No? I'm sorry for that.—But pray, why are you so scornful?

PRUE. As long as one must not speak one's mind, one had better not speak at all, I think; and truly I won't tell a lie for the matter.

BEN. Nay, you say true in that. 'Tis but a folly to lie; for to speak one thing and to think just the contrary way, is, as it were, to look one way and row another. Now, for my part, d'ye see, I'm for carrying things above board; I'm not for keeping anything under hatches—so that if you ben't as willing as I, say so, a' God's name! There's no harm done. Mayhap you may be shamefaced? Some maidens, tho'f[2] they love a man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n so to's face: if that's the case, why, silence gives consent.

PRUE. But I'm sure it is not so, for I'll speak sooner than you should believe that; and I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man; and I don't care, let my father do what he will—I'm too big to be whipped; so I'll tell you plainly I don't like you, nor love you at all—nor never will, that's more! So, there's your answer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing!

BEN. Look you, young woman; you may learn to give good words, however. I spoke you fair, d'ye see, and civil.—As for your love or your liking, I don't value it of a rope's end—and mayhap I like you as little as you do me.—What I said was in obedience to father; gad, I fear a whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one thing, if you should give such language at sea, you'd have a cat-o'-nine-tails laid across your shoulders. Flesh! who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me, of her own accord: whatever you think of yourself, gad, I don't think you are any more to compare to her than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch.

PRUE. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman, and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman that was here, that loves me, and I love him; and if he sees you speak to me any more, he'll thrash your jacket for you, he will—you great sea-calf!

BEN. What, do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? Will he thrash my jacket?—let'n—let'n. But an he comes near me, mayhap I may giv'n a salt eel[3] for's supper, for all that. What does father mean to leave me alone as soon as I come home, with such a dirty dowdy? Sea-calf! I an't calf enough to lick your chalked face, you cheese-curd, you!—Marry thee? oons, I'll marry a Lapland witch as soon, and live upon selling contrary winds and wrecked vessels.

PRUE. I won't be called names, nor I won't be abused thus—so I won't.—If I were a man (*Cries*), you durst not talk at

1 in that way. 2 Dial. "though." 3 a rope's end; used on ship for flogging.

this rate; no, you durst not, you stinking tar-barrel!

Enter MRS. FORESIGHT *and* MRS. FRAIL

MRS. FORESIGHT. (*Aside to* MRS FRAIL) They have quarrelled just as we could wish.

BEN. Tar-barrel? let your sweetheart there call me so if he'll take your part—your Tom Essence[1]—and I'll say something to him; gad, I'll lace his musk doublet for him! I'll make him stink! he shall smell more like a weasel than a civet cat afore I ha' done with 'en.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Bless me, what's the matter, miss? What, does she cry?—Mr. Benjamin, what have you done to her?

BEN. Let her cry: the more she cries, the less she'll—she has been gathering foul weather in her mouth, and now it rains out at her eyes.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Come, miss, come along with me, and tell me, poor child.

MRS. FRAIL. Lord, what shall we do? there's my brother Foresight and Sir Sampson coming.—Sister, do you take miss down into the parlor, and I'll carry Mr. Benjamin into my chamber, for they must not know that they are fallen out.—Come, sir, will you venture yourself with me?

(*Looking kindly on him*)

BEN. Venture! Mess, and that I will, though 'twere to sea in a storm. *Exeunt*

Enter SIR SAMPSON *and* FORESIGHT

SIR SAMPSON. I left 'em together here; what, are they gone? Ben's a brisk boy; he has got her into a corner—father's own son. Faith, he'll tousle her, and mousle her. The rogue's sharp set, coming from sea. If he should not stay for saying grace, old Foresight, but fall to without the help of a parson,—ha? Odd, if he should, I could not be angry with him; 'twould be but like me, *a chip of the old block*. Ha! thou'rt melancholic, old prognostication; as melancholic as if thou hadst spilt the salt, or pared thy nails on a Sunday.—Come, cheer up, look about thee: look up, old stargazer.—

(*Aside*) Now is he poring upon the ground for a crooked pin, or an old horse-nail with the head towards him.

FORESIGHT. Sir Sampson, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

SIR SAMPSON. With all my heart.

FORESIGHT. At ten o'clock—punctually at ten.

SIR SAMPSON. To a minute, to a second; thou shalt set thy watch, and the bridegroom shall observe its motions; they shall be married to a minute, go to bed to a minute, and when the alarm strikes, they shall keep time like the figures of St. Dunstan's clock, and *consummatum est*[2] shall ring all over the parish.

Enter SCANDAL

SCANDAL. Sir Sampson, sad news!

FORESIGHT. Bless us!

SIR SAMPSON. Why, what's the matter?

SCANDAL. Can't you guess at what ought to afflict you, and him, and all of us more than anything else?

SIR SAMPSON. Body o' me, I don't know any universal grievance but a new tax, or the loss of the Canary fleet.—Without popery should be landed in the west, or the French fleet were at anchor at Blackwall.

SCANDAL. No! Undoubtedly Mr. Foresight knew all this, and might have prevented it.

FORESIGHT. 'Tis no earthquake!

SCANDAL. No, not yet; nor whirlwind. But we don't know what it may come to.—But it has had a consequence already that touches us all.

SIR SAMPSON. Why, body o' me, out with't.

SCANDAL. Something has appeared to your son Valentine.—He's gone to bed upon't, and very ill.—He speaks little, yet says he has a world to say. Asks for his father and the wise Foresight; talks of Raymond Lully, and the ghost of Lilly. He has secrets to impart, I suppose, to you two. I can get nothing out of him but sighs. He desires he may see you in the morning, but would

1 I. e. your fop.

2 It has been brought to pass.

not be disturbed to-night because he has some business to do in a dream.

SIR SAMPSON. Hoity, toity, what have I to do with his dreams or his divinations?—Body o' me, this is a trick to defer signing the conveyance. I warrant the devil will tell him in a dream that he must not part with his estate; but I'll bring him a parson, to tell him that the devil's a liar; or, if that won't do, I'll bring a lawyer that shall outlie the devil. And so I'll try whether my blackguard or his shall get the better of the day. *Exit*

SCANDAL. Alas, Mr. Foresight! I'm afraid all is not right. You are a wise man, and a conscientious man—a searcher into obscurity and futurity; and if you commit an error, it is with a great deal of consideration and discretion and caution.

FORESIGHT. Ah, good Mr. Scandal—

SCANDAL. Nay, nay, 'tis manifest; I do not flatter you. But Sir Sampson is hasty, very hasty; I'm afraid he is not scrupulous enough, Mr. Foresight. He has been wicked, and Heaven grant he may mean well in his affair with you. But my mind gives me, these things cannot be wholly insignificant. You are wise and should not be overreached; methinks you should not.

FORESIGHT. Alas, Mr. Scandal! *Humanum est errare.*

SCANDAL. You say true, man will err; mere man will err—but you are something more. There have been wise men; but they were such as you—men who consulted the stars and were observers of omens.—Solomon was wise, but how?—by his judgment in astrology: so says Pineda in his third book and eighth chapter.

FORESIGHT. You are learned, Mr. Scandal!

SCANDAL. A trifler—but a lover of art. And the wise men of the East owed their instruction to a star, which is rightly observed by Gregory the Great in favor of astrology! And Albertus Magnus makes it the most valuable science; because, says he, it teaches us to consider the causation of causes in the causes of things.

FORESIGHT. I protest I honor you, Mr. Scandal: I did not think you had been read in these matters. Few young men are inclined—

SCANDAL. I thank my stars that have inclined me.—But I fear this marriage, and making over this estate, this transferring of a rightful inheritance, will bring judgments upon us. I prophesy it, and I would not have the fate of Cassandra, not to be believed. Valentine is disturbed; what can be the cause of that? And Sir Sampson is hurried on by an unusual violence.—I fear he does not act wholly from himself; methinks he does not look as he used to do.

FORESIGHT. He was always of an impetuous nature.—But as to this marriage, I have consulted the stars, and all appearances are prosperous.

SCANDAL. Come, come, Mr. Foresight, let not the prospect of worldly lucre carry you beyond your judgment, nor against your conscience—you are not satisfied that you act justly.

FORESIGHT. How?

SCANDAL. You are not satisfied, I say. I am loath to discourage you—but it is palpable that you are not satisfied.

FORESIGHT. How does it appear, Mr. Scandal? I think I am very well satisfied.

SCANDAL. Either you suffer yourself to deceive yourself, or you do not know yourself.

FORESIGHT. Pray explain yourself.

SCANDAL. Do you sleep well o' nights?

FORESIGHT. Very well.

SCANDAL. Are you certain? you do not look so.

FORESIGHT. I am in health, I think.

SCANDAL. So was Valentine this morning, and looked just so.

FORESIGHT. How! am I altered any way? I don't perceive it.

SCANDAL. That may be, but your beard is longer than it was two hours ago.

FORESIGHT. Indeed! bless me!

Enter MRS. FORESIGHT

MRS. FORESIGHT. Husband, will you go to bed? it's ten o'clock.—Mr. Scandal, your servant.

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) Pox on her! she has interrupted my design: but I must work her into the project.—(*Aloud*) You keep early hours, madam.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Mr. Foresight is punctual; we sit up after him.

FORESIGHT. My dear, pray lend me your glass—your little looking-glass.

SCANDAL. Pray, lend it him, madam—I'll tell you the reason.—(*She gives him the glass:* SCANDAL *and she talk aside*) My passion for you is grown so violent, that I am no longer master of myself.—I was interrupted in the morning, when you had charity enough to give me your attention, and I had hopes of finding another opportunity of explaining myself to you, but was disappointed all this day; and the uneasiness that has attended me ever since, brings me now hither at this unseasonable hour.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Was there ever such impudence! to make love to me before my husband's face! I swear, I'll tell him.

SCANDAL. Do; I'll die a martyr rather than disclaim my passion. But come a little farther this way, and I'll tell you what project I had to get him out of the way, that I might have an opportunity of waiting upon you.

FORESIGHT. (*Looking in the glass*) I do not see any revolution here; methinks I look with a serene and benign aspect—pale, a little pale—but the roses of these cheeks have been gathered many years.—Ha! I do not like that sudden flushing—gone already!—hem, hem, hem! faintish. My heart is pretty good; yet it beats; and my pulses, ha!—I have none—mercy on me!—hum—yes, here they are—gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, hey! whither will they hurry me?—Now they're gone again—and now I'm faint again; and pale again, and, hem! and my, hem!—breath, hem!—grows short; hem! hem! he, he, hem!

SCANDAL. (*Aside to* MRS. FORESIGHT) It takes; pursue it, in the name of love and pleasure!

MRS. FORESIGHT. How do you do, Mr. Foresight?

FORESIGHT. Hum, not so well as I thought I was. Lend me your hand.

SCANDAL. Look you there now—your lady says your sleep has been unquiet of late.

FORESIGHT. Very likely.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, mighty restless; but I was afraid to tell him so. He has been subject to talking and starting.

SCANDAL. And did not use to be so?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Never, never, till within these three nights; I cannot say that he has once broken my rest since we have been married.

FORESIGHT. I will go to bed.

SCANDAL. Do so, Mr. Foresight, and say your prayers.—He looks better than he did.

MRS. FORESIGHT. [*Calls*] Nurse, nurse!

FORESIGHT. Do you think so, Mr. Scandal?

SCANDAL. Yes, yes; I hope this will be gone by morning, taking it in time.

FORESIGHT. I hope so.

Enter Nurse

MRS. FORESIGHT. Nurse, your master is not well; put him to bed.

SCANDAL. I hope you will be able to see Valentine in the morning. You had best take a little diacodian[1] and cowslip water, and lie upon your back; maybe you may dream.

FORESIGHT. I thank you, Mr. Scandal, I will.—Nurse, let me have a watch-light, and lay *The Crumbs of Comfort* by me.

NURSE. Yes, sir.

FORESIGHT. And—hem, hem! I am very faint.

SCANDAL. No, no; you look much better.

FORESIGHT. Do I?—(*To* Nurse) And, d'ye hear, bring me, let me see—within a quarter of twelve—hem—he, hem!—just upon the turning of the tide, bring me the urinal. And I hope neither the lord of my ascendant, nor the moon, will be combust[2]; and then I may do well.

SCANDAL. I hope so. Leave that to me; I will erect a scheme, and I hope I shall find both Sol and Venus in the sixth house.

1 An opiate of syrup and poppies.
2 Obscured or overpowered by the sun.

FORESIGHT. I thank you, Mr. Scandal; indeed, that would be a great comfort to me. —Hem, hem; good night. *Exit with* Nurse

SCANDAL. Good night, good Mr. Foresight, and I hope Mars and Venus will be in conjunction while your wife and I are together.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Well, and what use do you hope to make of this project? you don't think that you are ever like to succeed in your design upon me? 781

SCANDAL. Yes, faith, I do; I have a better opinion both of you and myself than to despair.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Did you ever hear such a toad? Hark ye, devil! do you think any woman honest? 787

SCANDAL. Yes, several very honest; they'll cheat a little at cards, sometimes, but that's nothing.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Pshaw! but virtuous, I mean. 792

SCANDAL. Yes, faith; I believe some women are virtuous too, but 'tis as I believe some men are valiant, through fear. For why should a man court danger, or a woman shun pleasure? 797

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, monstrous! what are conscience and honor?

SCANDAL. Why, honor is a public enemy, and conscience a domestic thief; and he that would secure his pleasure, must pay a tribute to one, and go halves with t'other. As for honor, that you have secured; for you have purchased a perpetual opportunity for pleasure. 806

MRS. FORESIGHT. An opportunity for pleasure?

SCANDAL. Aye, your husband. A husband is an opportunity for pleasure; so you have taken care of honor, and 'tis the least I can do to take care of conscience. 812

MRS. FORESIGHT. And so you think we are free for one another?

SCANDAL. Yes, faith, I think so; I love to speak my mind. 816

MRS. FORESIGHT. Why, then I'll speak my mind.—Now, as to this affair between you and me. Here you make love to me; why, I'll confess, it does not displease me. Your person is well enough, and your understanding is not amiss. 822

SCANDAL. I have no great opinion of myself; yet I think I'm neither deformed nor a fool.

MRS. FORESIGHT. But you have a villainous character; you are a libertine in speech as well as practice. 827

SCANDAL. Come, I know what you would say; you think it more dangerous to be seen in conversation with me than to allow some other men the last favor. You mistake; the liberty I take in talking is purely affected, for the service of your sex. He that first cries out, "Stop, thief!" is often he that has stolen the treasure. I am a juggler, that act[s] by confederacy; and, if you please, we'll put a trick upon the world. 837

MRS. FORESIGHT. Aye; but you are such a universal juggler, that I'm afraid you have a great many confederates.

SCANDAL. Faith, I'm sound.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, fie!—I'll swear you're impudent. 843

SCANDAL. I'll swear you're handsome.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Pish! you'd tell me so though you did not think so.

SCANDAL. And you'd think so though I should not tell you so. And now I think we know one another pretty well. 849

MRS. FORESIGHT. —O Lord, who's here?

Enter MRS. FRAIL *and* BEN

BEN. Mess, I love to speak my mind; father has nothing to do with me.—Nay, I can't say that neither; he has something to do with me. But what does that signify? If so be that I ben't minded to be steered by him, 'tis as tho'f he should strive against wind and tide. 857

MRS. FRAIL. Aye. But, my dear, we must keep it secret till the estate be settled; for you know marrying without an estate is like sailing in a ship without ballast. 861

BEN. He! he! he! Why, that's true; just so for all the world it is indeed, as like as two cable-ropes.

MRS. FRAIL. And tho' I have a good portion, you know one would not venture all in one bottom. 867

BEN. Why, that's true again; for mayhap one bottom may spring a leak. You have hit it indeed, mess; you've nicked[1] the channel.

MRS. FRAIL. Well, but if you should forsake me after all, you'd break my heart.

BEN. Break your heart! I'd rather the Marygold should break her cable in a storm, as well as I love her. Flesh! you don't think I'm false-hearted like a landman! A sailor will be honest, tho'f mayhap he has never a penny of money in his pocket.—Mayhap I may not have so fair a face as a citizen or a courtier; but all for that, I've as good blood in my veins, and a heart as sound as a biscuit.

MRS. FRAIL. And will you love me always?

BEN. Nay, an I love once, I'll stick like pitch; I'll tell you that. Come, I'll sing you a song of a sailor.

MRS. FRAIL. Hold, there's my sister; I'll call her to hear it.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Well, I won't go to bed to my husband to-night, because I'll retire to my own chamber and think of what you have said.

SCANDAL. Well; you'll give me leave to wait upon you to your chamber door, and leave you my last instructions?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Hold, here's my sister coming towards us.

MRS. FRAIL. If it won't interrupt you, I'll entertain you with a song.

BEN. The song was made upon one of our ship's crew's wife; our boatswain made the song. Mayhap you may know her, sir: before she was married, she was called buxom Joan of Deptford.

SCANDAL. I have heard of her.

(BEN *sings*)

BALLAD

(Set by Mr. John Eccles)

A soldier and a sailor,
A tinker and a tailor,
Had once a doubtful strife, sir,
To make a maid a wife, sir,
  Whose name was buxom Joan.

For now the time was ended,
When she no more intended
To lick her lips at men, sir,
And gnaw the sheets in vain, sir,
  And lie o' nights alone.

The soldier swore like thunder,
He loved her more than plunder;
And showed her many a scar, sir,
That he had brought from far, sir,
  With fighting for her sake.
The tailor thought to please her,
With offering her his measure;
The tinker too with mettle,
Said he could mend her kettle,
  And stop up every leak.

But while these three were prating,
The sailor slily waiting,
Thought if it came about, sir,
That they should all fall out, sir,
  He then might play his part.
And just e'en as he meant, sir,
To loggerheads they went,[2] sir,
And then he let fly at her
A shot 'twixt 'wind and water,
  That won this fair maid's heart.

If some of our crew that came to see me are not gone, you shall see that we sailors can dance sometimes as well as other folks.—(*Whistles*) I warrant that brings 'em, an they be within hearing.

Enter Seamen

Oh, here they be!—and fiddles along with 'em. Come, my lads, let's have a round, and I'll make one. (*They dance*)

BEN. We're merry folks, we sailors; we han't much to care for. Thus we live at sea—eat biscuit and drink flip, put on a clean shirt once a quarter, come home and lie with our landladies once a year, get rid of a little money, and then put off with the next fair wind. How d'ye like us?

MRS. FRAIL. Oh, you are the happiest, merriest men alive!

MRS. FORESIGHT. We're beholden to Mr. Benjamin for this entertainment.—I believe it's late.

1 hit.

2 came to blows.

BEN. Why, forsooth, an you think so, you had best go to bed. For my part, I mean to toss a can and remember my sweetheart afore I turn in; mayhap I may dream of her.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Mr. Scandal, you had best go to bed and dream too.

SCANDAL. Why, faith, I have a good lively imagination, and can dream as much to the purpose as another if I set about it. But dreaming is the poor retreat of a lazy, hopeless, and imperfect lover; 'tis the last glimpse of love to worn-out sinners, and the faint dawning of a bliss to wishing girls and growing boys.

There's nought but willing, waking love that can
Make blest the ripened maid and finished man.

Exeunt

ACT IV

SCENE I. [*A room in* VALENTINE'S *lodging*]

[*Enter*] SCANDAL *and* JEREMY

SCANDAL. Well, is your master ready? does he look madly and talk madly?

JEREMY. Yes, sir; you need make no great doubt of that. He that was so near turning poet yesterday morning, can't be much to seek in playing the madman to-day.

SCANDAL. Would he have Angelica acquainted with the reason of his design?

JEREMY. No, sir, not yet; he has a mind to try whether his playing the madman won't make her play the fool and fall in love with him, or at least own that she has loved him all this while and concealed it.

SCANDAL. I saw her take coach just now with her maid, and think I heard her bid the coachman drive hither.

JEREMY. Like enough, sir, for I told her maid this morning my master was run stark mad only for love of her mistress. I hear a coach stop; if it should be she, sir, I believe he would not see her till he hears how she takes it.

SCANDAL. Well, I'll try her. 'Tis she; here she comes.

Enter ANGELICA *with* JENNY

ANGELICA. Mr. Scandal, I suppose you don't think it a novelty to see a woman visit a man at his own lodgings in a morning?

SCANDAL. Not upon a kind occasion, madam. But when a lady comes tyrannically to insult a ruined lover and make manifest the cruel triumphs of her beauty, the barbarity of it something surprises me.

ANGELICA. I don't like raillery from a serious face.—Pray tell me what is the matter?

JEREMY. No strange matter, madam; my master's mad, that's all. I suppose your ladyship has thought him so a great while.

ANGELICA. How d'ye mean, mad?

JEREMY. Why, faith, madam, he's mad for want of his wits, just as he was poor for want of money. His head is e'en as light as his pockets, and anybody that has a mind to a bad bargain, can't do better than to beg him for his estate.

ANGELICA. If you speak truth, your endeavoring at wit is very unseasonable.

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) She's concerned, and loves him.

ANGELICA. Mr. Scandal, you cannot think me guilty of so much inhumanity as not to be concerned for a man I must own myself obliged to; pray tell me the truth.

SCANDAL. Faith, madam, I wish telling a lie would mend the matter. But this is no new effect of an unsuccessful passion.

ANGELICA. (*Aside*) I know not what to think.—Yet I should be vexed to have a trick put upon me.—(*Aloud*) May I not see him?

SCANDAL. I'm afraid the physician is not willing you should see him yet.—Jeremy, go in and inquire. *Exit* JEREMY

ANGELICA. (*Aside*) Ha! I saw him wink and smile—I fancy 'tis a trick—I'll try.—(*Aloud*) I would disguise to all the world a failing which I must own to you.—I fear my happiness depends upon the recovery of Valentine. Therefore I conjure you, as you are his friend, and as you have compassion

upon one fearful of affliction, to tell me what I am to hope for.—I cannot speak—but you may tell me, for you know what I would ask.

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) So! this is pretty plain.—(*Aloud*) Be not too much concerned, madam; I hope his condition is not desperate. An acknowledgment of love from you, perhaps, may work a cure, as the fear of your aversion occasioned his distemper.

ANGELICA. (*Aside*) Say you so? nay, then I'm convinced; and if I don't play trick for trick, may I never taste the pleasure of revenge!—(*Aloud*) Acknowledgment of love! I find you have mistaken my compassion, and think me guilty of a weakness I am a stranger to. But I have too much sincerity to deceive you, and too much charity to suffer him to be deluded with vain hopes. Good nature and humanity oblige me to be concerned for him, but to love is neither in my power nor inclination. And if he can't be cured without I suck the poison from his wounds, I'm afraid he won't recover his senses till I lose mine.

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) Hey, brave woman, i'faith!—(*Aloud*) Won't you see him then, if he desire it?

ANGELICA. What signify a madman's desires? Besides 'twould make me uneasy. If I don't see him, perhaps my concern for him may lessen. If I forget him, 'tis no more than he has done by himself; and now the surprise is over, methinks I am not half so sorry for him as I was.

SCANDAL. So! faith, good nature works apace; you were confessing just now an obligation to his love.

ANGELICA. But I have considered that passions are unreasonable and involuntary. If he loves, he can't help it; and if I don't love, I can't help it—no more than he can help his being a man, or I my being a woman; or no more than I can help my want of inclination to stay longer here.—Come, Jenny.

Exeunt ANGELICA *and* JENNY

SCANDAL. Humph!—An admirable composition, faith, this same womankind!

[*Re-*]*enter* JEREMY

JEREMY. What, is she gone, sir?

SCANDAL. Gone? Why, she was never here; nor anywhere else; nor I don't know her if I see her, nor you neither.

JEREMY. Good lack! What's the matter now? Are any more of us to be mad? Why, sir, my master longs to see her, and is almost mad in good earnest with the joyful news of her being here.

SCANDAL. We are all under a mistake. Ask no questions, for I can't resolve you; but I'll inform your master. In the meantime, if our project succeed no better with his father than it does with his mistress, he may descend from his exaltation of madness into the road of common sense, and be content only to be made a fool with other reasonable people.—I hear Sir Sampson. You know your cue; I'll to your master. *Exit*

Enter SIR SAMPSON LEGEND [*and* BUCKRAM]

SIR SAMPSON. D'ye see, Mr. Buckram, here's the paper signed with his own hand.

BUCKRAM. Good, sir. And the conveyance is ready drawn in this box, if he be ready to sign and seal.

SIR SAMPSON. Ready? Body o' me, he must be ready! His sham sickness shan't excuse him.—Oh, here's his scoundrel.—[*To* JEREMY] Sirrah,[1] where's your master?

JEREMY. Ah, sir, he's quite gone.

SIR SAMPSON. Gone! What, he is not dead?

JEREMY. No, sir, not dead.

SIR SAMPSON. What, is he gone out of town? Run away, ha! Has he tricked me?—Speak, varlet!

JEREMY. No, no, sir; he's safe enough, sir, an he were but as sound, poor gentleman. He is, indeed, here, sir—and not here, sir.

SIR SAMPSON. Heyday, rascal, do you banter me? Sirrah, d'ye banter me?—Speak, sirrah, where is he? for I will find him.

JEREMY. Would you could, sir! for he has lost himself. Indeed, sir, I have almost broke my heart about him—I can't refrain tears

1 The usual term for a servant.

when I think of him, sir. I'm as melancholy for him as a passing-bell,[1] sir, or a horse in a pound.

SIR SAMPSON. A pox confound your similitudes, sir!—Speak to be understood, and tell me in plain terms what the matter is with him, or I'll crack your fool's skull.

JEREMY. Ah, you've hit it, sir! that's the matter with him, sir; his skull's cracked, poor gentleman! He's stark mad, sir.

SIR SAMPSON. Mad!

BUCKRAM. What, is he *non compos*?

JEREMY. Quite *non compos*, sir.

BUCKRAM. Why, then all's obliterated, Sir Sampson; if he be *non compos mentis*,[2] his act and deed will be of no effect. It is not good in law.

SIR SAMPSON. Oons, I won't believe it! Let me see him, sir.—Mad! I'll make him find his senses.

JEREMY. Mr. Scandal is with him, sir; I'll knock at the door.

(*Goes to the scene, which opens and discovers* VALENTINE *upon a couch, disorderly dressed*, [*with*] SCANDAL *by him*)

SIR SAMPSON. How now! what's here to do?

VALENTINE. (*Starting*) Ha! who's that?

SCANDAL. For Heaven's sake softly, sir, and gently! Don't provoke him.

VALENTINE. Answer me; who is that—and that?

SIR SAMPSON. [*Aside*] Gad's bobs, does he not know me? Is he mischievous? I'll speak gently. [*Aloud*] Val, Val, dost thou not know me, boy? Not know thy own father, Val? I am thy own father, and this is honest Brief Buckram, the lawyer.

VALENTINE. It may be so—I did not know you—the world is full.—There are people that we do know and people that we do not know; and yet the sun shines upon all alike.—There are fathers that have many children, and there are children that have many fathers—'tis strange! But I am Truth, and come to give the world the lie.

SIR SAMPSON. Body o' me, I know not what to say to him!

VALENTINE. Why does that lawyer wear black?—does he carry his conscience without-outside?—Lawyer, what art thou? Dost thou know me?

BUCKRAM. O Lord! what must I say?—Yes, sir.

VALENTINE. Thou liest, for I am Truth. 'Tis hard I cannot get a livelihood amongst you. I have been sworn out of Westminster Hall the first day of every term—let me see—no matter how long—but I'll tell you one thing; it's a question that would puzzle an arithmetician if you should ask him, whether the Bible saves more souls in Westminster Abbey or damns more in Westminster Hall. For my part, I am Truth, and can't tell; I have very few acquaintance.

SIR SAMPSON. Body o' me, he talks sensibly in his madness! Has he no intervals?

JEREMY. Very short, sir.

BUCKRAM. Sir, I can do you no service while he's in this condition. Here's your paper, sir—he may do me a mischief if I stay—the conveyance is ready, sir, if he recover his senses. *Exit* BUCKRAM

SIR SAMPSON. Hold, hold!—don't you go yet!

SCANDAL. You'd better let him go, sir, and send for him if there be occasion; for I fancy his presence provokes him more.

VALENTINE. Is the lawyer gone? 'Tis well; then we may drink a bout without going together by the ears. Heigh-ho! What o'clock is't?—My father here! Your blessing, sir.

SIR SAMPSON. He recovers.—Bless thee, Val—how dost thou do, boy?

VALENTINE. Thank you, sir, pretty well—I have been a little out of order—won't you please to sit, sir?

SIR SAMPSON. Aye, boy.—Come, thou shalt sit down by me.

VALENTINE. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait.

SIR SAMPSON. No, no, come, come, sit thee down, honest Val; how dost thou do?

[1] funeral bell. [2] not of sound mind.

Let me feel thy pulse.—Oh, pretty well now, Val; body o' me, I was sorry to see thee indisposed! But I'm glad thou art better, honest Val.

VALENTINE. I thank you, sir.

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) Miracle! the monster grows loving!

SIR SAMPSON. Let me feel thy hand again, Val; it does not shake—I believe thou canst write, Val. Ha, boy, thou canst write thy name, Val?—Jeremy, step and overtake Mr. Buckram; bid him make haste back with the conveyance! quick! quick!

(*Whispers to* JEREMY, *who goes out*)

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) That ever I should suspect such a heathen of any remorse!

SIR SAMPSON. Dost thou know this paper, Val? I know thou'rt honest, and wilt perform articles.[1]

(*Shows him the paper, but holds it out of his reach*)

VALENTINE. Pray, let me see it, sir. You hold it so far off, that I can't tell whether I know it or no.

SIR SAMPSON. See it, boy? aye, aye. Why, thou dost see it—'tis thy own hand, Val. Why, let me see, I can read it as plain as can be; look you here—(*Reads*) "The conditions of this obligation"—look you, as plain as can be, so it begins; and then at the bottom—"As witness my hand, Valentine Legend," in great letters; why, 'tis as plain as the nose in one's face;—what, are my eyes better than thine? I believe I can read it farther off yet—let me see.

(*Stretches out his arm as far as he can*)

VALENTINE. Will you please to let me hold it, sir?

SIR SAMPSON. Let thee hold it, sayest thou?—aye, with all my heart.—What matter is it who holds it? what need anybody hold it?—I'll put it in my pocket, Val, and then nobody need hold it.—(*Puts the paper in his pocket*) There, Val, it's safe enough, boy—but thou shalt have it as soon as thou hast set thy hand to another paper, little Val.

1 keep your agreements.

Re-enter JEREMY *with* BUCKRAM

VALENTINE. What, is my bad genius here again! Oh, no, it is the lawyer with his itching palm; and he's come to be scratched. My nails are not long enough—let me have a pair of red-hot tongs, quickly! quickly! and you shall see me act St. Dunstan, and lead the devil by the nose.

BUCKRAM. O Lord, let me be gone! I'll not venture myself with a madman.

Exit BUCKRAM

VALENTINE. Ha! ha! ha! you need not run so fast; honesty will not overtake you.—Ha! ha! ha! the rogue found me out to be *in forma pauperis* presently.

SIR SAMPSON. Oons! what a vexation is here! I know not what to do or say, or which way to go.

VALENTINE. Who's that, that's out of his way? I am Truth and can set him right.—Hark ye, friend, the straight road is the worst way you can go: he that follows his nose always, will very often be led into a stink.—*Probatum est.*[2]—But what are you for—religion or politics? There's a couple of topics for you no more like one another than oil and vinegar, and yet those two beaten together by a state-cook make sauce for the whole nation.

SIR SAMPSON. What the devil had I to do, ever to beget sons? Why did I ever marry?

VALENTINE. Because thou wert a monster, old boy; the two greatest monsters in the world are a man and a woman. What's thy opinion?

SIR SAMPSON. Why, my opinion is that those two monsters joined together, make a yet greater—that's a man and his wife.

VALENTINE. Aha, old truepenny! sayest thou so? Thou hast nicked it.—But it's wonderful strange, Jeremy.

JEREMY. What is, sir?

VALENTINE. That grey hairs should cover a green head, and I make a fool of my father.—What's here! *Erra Pater*, or a bearded Sibyl? If Prophecy comes, Truth must give place.

Exeunt

2 It has been demonstrated.

SCENE II. *An ante-room at* VALENTINE'S *lodgings*

Enter SIR SAMPSON, SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* MRS. FRAIL

FORESIGHT. What says he? What, did he prophesy?—Ha, Sir Sampson, bless us! how are we?

SIR SAMPSON. Are we! A pox o' your prognostication—why, we are fools as we use to be.—Oons, that you could not foresee that the moon would predominate, and my son be mad!—Where's your oppositions, your trines, and your quadrates?—What did your Cardan and your Ptolemy tell you? your Messahalah and your Longomontanus, your harmony of chiromancy with astrology? Ah! pox on't, that I that know the world, and men, and manners; that don't believe a syllable in the sky and stars, and suns, and almanacs, and trash, should be directed by a dreamer, an omen-hunter, and defer business in expectation of a lucky hour! when, body o' me, there never was a lucky hour after the first opportunity.

Exit SIR SAMPSON

FORESIGHT. Ah, Sir Sampson, Heaven help your head! This is none of your lucky hour! *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.*[1]—What, is he gone, and in contempt of science? Ill stars and unconverted ignorance attend him!

SCANDAL. You must excuse his passion, Mr. Foresight, for he has been heartily vexed.—His son is *non compos mentis*, and thereby incapable of making any conveyance in law, so that all his measures are disappointed.

FORESIGHT. Ha! Say you so?

MRS. FRAIL. (*Aside to* MRS. FORESIGHT) What, has my sea-lover lost his anchor of hope then?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, sister, what will you do with him?

MRS. FRAIL. Do with him? Send him to sea again in the next foul weather.—He's used to an inconstant element, and won't be surprised to see the tide turned.

FORESIGHT. (*Considers*) Wherein was I mistaken, not to foresee this?

SCANDAL. (*Aside to* MRS. FORESIGHT) Madam, you and I can tell him something else that he did not foresee, and more particularly relating to his own fortune.

MRS. FORESIGHT. (*Aside to* SCANDAL) What do you mean? I don't understand you.

SCANDAL. Hush, softly—the pleasures of last night, my dear! too considerable to be forgot so soon.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Last night! And what would your impudence infer from last night? Last night was like the night before, I think.

SCANDAL. 'Sdeath, do you make no difference between me and your husband?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Not much; he's superstitious, and you are mad, in my opinion.

SCANDAL. You make me mad.—You are not serious; pray, recollect yourself.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, yes, now I remember, you were very impertinent and impudent, and would have come to bed to me.

SCANDAL. And did not?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Did not! With what face can you ask the question?

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) This I have heard of before, but never believed. I have been told she had that admirable quality of forgetting to a man's face in the morning that she had lain with him all night, and denying that she had done favors with more impudence than she could grant 'em.—Madam, I'm your humble servant, and honor you.—(*Aloud*) You look pretty well, Mr. Foresight.—How did you rest last night?

FORESIGHT. Truly, Mr. Scandal, I was so taken up with broken dreams and distracted visions that I remember little.

SCANDAL. 'Twas a very forgetting night.—But would you not talk with Valentine? Perhaps you may understand him. I'm apt to believe there is something mysterious in his discourses, and sometimes rather think him inspired than mad.

FORESIGHT. You speak with singular good judgment, Mr. Scandal, truly.—I am inclining to your Turkish opinion in this matter,

[1] No one is wise at all times.

and do reverence a man whom the vulgar think mad. Let us go to him.

Exeunt FORESIGHT *and* SCANDAL

MRS. FRAIL. Sister, do you [go] with them; I'll find out my lover and give him his discharge, and come to you.—O' my conscience, here he comes.

Exit MRS. FORESIGHT

Enter BEN

BEN. All mad, I think.—Flesh, I believe all the calentures[1] of the sea are come ashore, for my part!

MRS. FRAIL. Mr. Benjamin in choler!

BEN. No, I'm pleased well enough now I have found you.—Mess, I have had such a hurricane upon your account yonder!

MRS. FRAIL. My account! Pray, what's the matter?

BEN. Why, father came and found me squabbling with yon chitty-faced thing as he would have me marry—so he asked what was the matter. He asked in a surly sort of a way. It seems brother Val is gone mad, and so that put'n into a passion: but what did I know [of] that? What's that to me? —So he asked in a surly sort of manner—and gad, I answered 'en as surlily. What tho'f he be my father? I an't bound prentice to 'en. So, faith, I told'n in plain terms, if I were minded to marry I'd marry to please myself, not him: and for the young woman that he provided for me, I thought it more fitting for her to learn her sampler and make dirt-pies, than to look after a husband; for my part I was none of her man.—I had another voyage to make, let him take it as he will.

MRS. FRAIL. So then, you intend to go to sea again?

BEN. Nay, nay, my mind run upon you—but I would not tell him so much. So he said he'd make my heart ache, and if so be that he could get a woman to his mind, he'd marry himself. Gad, says I, an you play the fool and marry at these years, there's more danger of your head's aching than my heart.—He was woundy angry when I gav'n that wipe. He hadn't a word to say, and so I left'n and the green girl together. Mayhap the bee may bite, and he'll marry her himself—with all my heart.

MRS. FRAIL. And were you this undutiful and graceless wretch to your father?

BEN. Then why was he graceless first?—If I am undutiful and graceless, why did he beget me so? I did not get myself.

MRS. FRAIL. O impiety! How have I been mistaken! What an inhuman, merciless creature have I set my heart upon! Oh, I am happy to have discovered the shelves and quicksands that lurk beneath that faithless, smiling face!

BEN. Hey, toss? What's the matter now? Why, you ben't angry, be you?

MRS. FRAIL. Oh, see me no more! for thou wert born amongst rocks, suckled by whales, cradled in a tempest, and whistled to by winds; and thou art come forth with fins, and scales, and three rows of teeth—a most outrageous fish of prey.

BEN. O Lord, O Lord, she's mad! Poor young woman, love has turned her senses; her brain is quite overset! Welladay, how shall I do to set her to rights?

MRS. FRAIL. No, no, I am not mad, monster; I am wise enough to find you out. Hadst thou the impudence to aspire at being a husband, with that stubborn and disobedient temper?—you that know not how to submit to a father, presume to have a sufficient stock of duty to undergo a wife? I should have been finely fobbed indeed—very finely fobbed.

BEN. Hark ye, forsooth—if so be that you are in your right senses, d'ye see. For aught as I perceive, I'm like to be finely fobbed—if I have got anger here upon your account, and you are tacked about already.—What d'ye mean, after all your fair speeches and stroking my cheeks, and kissing, and hugging—what, would you sheer off so?—Would you, and leave me aground?

MRS. FRAIL. No, I'll leave you adrift, and go which way you will.

BEN. What, are you false-hearted, then?

MRS. FRAIL. Only the wind's changed.

[1] A tropical fever leading one to jump overboard.

BEN. More shame for you—the wind's changed! It's an ill wind blows nobody good—mayhap I have a good riddance on you, if these be your tricks. What did you mean all this while—to make a fool of me?

MRS. FRAIL. Any fool but a husband.

BEN. Husband! Gad, I would not be your husband if you would have me, now I know your mind, tho'f you had your weight in gold and jewels and tho'f I loved you never so well.

MRS. FRAIL. Why, canst thou love, porpoise?

BEN. No matter what I can do. Don't call names—I don't love you so well as to bear that, whatever I did. I'm glad you show yourself, mistress.—Let them marry you as don't know you—gad, I know you too well, by sad experience! I believe he that marries you will go to sea in a hen-pecked frigate—I believe that, young woman—and mayhap may come to an anchor at Cuckold's-point; so there's a dash for you, take it as you will. Mayhap you may holla after me when I won't come, too.

Exit BEN

MRS. FRAIL. Ha! ha! ha! no doubt on't—

(*Sings*)

My true love is gone to sea—

[*Re-*]*enter* MRS. FORESIGHT

MRS. FRAIL. O sister, had you come a minute sooner, you would have seen the resolution of a lover! Honest Tar and I are parted—and with the same indifference that we met. O' my life, I am half vexed at the insensibility of a brute that I despised.

MRS. FORESIGHT. What! Then he bore it most heroically?

MRS. FRAIL. Most tyrannically—for you see he has got the start of me, and I, the poor forsaken maid, am left complaining on the shore. But I'll tell you a hint that he has given me; Sir Sampson is enraged, and talks desperately of committing matrimony himself. If he has a mind to throw himself away, he can't do it more effectually than upon me—if we could bring it about.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Oh, hang him, old fox! he's too cunning; besides, he hates both you and me. But I have a project in my head for you, and I have gone a good way towards it. I have almost made a bargain with Jeremy, Valentine's man, to sell his master to us.

MRS. FRAIL. Sell him! How?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Valentine raves upon Angelica, and took me for her, and Jeremy says will take anybody for her that he imposes on him. Now, I have promised him mountains, if in one of his mad fits he will bring you to him in her stead, and get you married together, and put to bed together; and after consummation, girl, there's no revoking. And if he should recover his senses, he'll be glad at least to make you a good settlement.—Here they come: stand aside a little, and tell me how you like the design.

[*They withdraw to one side*]

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, *and* JEREMY

SCANDAL. (*To* JEREMY) And have you given your master a hint of their plot upon him?

JEREMY. Yes, sir; he says he'll favor it, and mistake her for Angelica.

SCANDAL. It may make us sport.

FORESIGHT. Mercy on us!

VALENTINE. Hush!—interrupt me not: I'll whisper prediction to thee, and thou shalt prophesy. I am Truth, and can teach thy tongue a new trick: I have told thee what's past—now I'll tell what's to come. Dost thou know what will happen to-morrow?—answer me not—for I will tell thee. To-morrow, knaves will thrive through craft, and fools through fortune, and honesty will go as it did, frost-nipped in a summer suit. Ask me questions concerning to-morrow.

SCANDAL. Ask him, Mr. Foresight.

FORESIGHT. Pray, what will be done at court?

VALENTINE. Scandal will tell you. I am Truth; I never come there.

FORESIGHT. In the City?

VALENTINE. Oh, prayers will be said in empty churches, at the usual hours. Yet you

will see such zealous faces behind the counters, as if religion were to be sold in every shop. Oh, things will go methodically, in the City; the clocks will strike twelve at noon, and the horned herd buzz in the Exchange at two. Husbands and wives will drive distinct trades, and care and pleasure separately occupy the family. Coffee-houses will be full of smoke and stratagem. And the cropped prentice, that sweeps his master's shop in the morning, may, ten to one, dirty his sheets before night. But there are two things that you will see very strange; which are wanton wives with their legs at liberty, and tame cuckolds with chains about their necks. —But hold, I must examine you before I go further; you look suspiciously. Are you a husband? 287

FORESIGHT. I am married.

VALENTINE. Poor creature! is your wife of Covent Garden parish?[1]

FORESIGHT. No; St. Martin's-in-the-fields.

VALENTINE. Alas, poor man! His eyes are sunk, and his hands shrivelled; his legs dwindled, and his back bowed! Pray, pray, for a metamorphosis. Change thy shape, and shake off age; get thee Medea's kettle, and be boiled anew; come forth with laboring, callous hands, a chine of steel, and Atlas shoulders. Let Taliacotius trim the calves of twenty chairmen, and make thee pedestals to stand erect upon, and look matrimony in the face.—Ha! ha! ha! that a man should have a stomach to a wedding supper, when the pigeons ought rather to be laid to his feet! Ha! ha! ha! 305

FORESIGHT. His frenzy is very high now, Mr. Scandal.

SCANDAL. I believe it is a spring-tide.

FORESIGHT. Very likely, truly; you understand these matters—Mr. Scandal, I shall be very glad to confer with you about these things which he has uttered—his sayings are very mysterious and hieroglyphical. 313

VALENTINE. Oh, why would Angelica be absent from my eyes so long?

JEREMY. She's here, sir.

MRS. FORESIGHT. [*Advancing with* MRS. FRAIL]—Now, sister. 317

MRS. FRAIL. O Lord, what must I say?

SCANDAL. Humor him, madam, by all means.

VALENTINE. Where is she? Oh, I see her —she comes like riches, health, and liberty at once, to a despairing, starving, and abandoned wretch.—Oh, welcome, welcome!

MRS. FRAIL. How d'ye, sir? can I serve you? 325

VALENTINE. Hark ye—I have a secret to tell you. Endymion and the moon shall meet us upon Mount Latmos, and we'll be married in the dead of night—but say not a word. Hymen shall put his torch into a dark lanthorn, that it may be secret; and Juno shall give her peacock poppy-water, that he may fold his ogling tail, and Argus's hundred eyes be shut. Ha! Nobody shall know but Jeremy.

MRS. FRAIL. No, no, we'll keep it secret; it shall be done presently. 336

VALENTINE. The sooner the better.—Jeremy, come hither—closer—that none may overhear us. Jeremy, I can tell you news; Angelica is turned nun, and I am turning friar, and yet we'll marry one another in spite of the pope. Get me a cowl and beads, that I may play my part; for she'll meet me two hours hence in black and white, and a long veil to cover the project, and we won't see one another's faces till we have done something to be ashamed of, and then we'll blush once for all. 348

Enter TATTLE *and* ANGELICA

JEREMY. I'll take care, and—

VALENTINE. Whisper.

ANGELICA. Nay, Mr. Tattle, if you make love to me, you spoil my design, for I intend to make you my confidant. 353

TATTLE. But, madam, to throw away your person—such a person, and such a fortune —on a madman?

ANGELICA. I never loved him till he was mad; but don't tell anybody so.

SCANDAL. (*Aside*) How's this! Tattle making love to Angelica? 360

TATTLE. Tell, madam! alas, you don't know me—I have much ado to tell your

[1] I.e. of bad habits.

ladyship how long I have been in love with you; but encouraged by the impossibility of Valentine's making any more addresses to you, I have ventured to declare the very inmost passion of my heart. Oh, madam, look upon us both; there you see the ruins of a poor decayed creature—here a complete and lively figure, with youth, and health, and all his five senses in perfection, madam —and to all this, the most passionate lover—

ANGELICA. Oh, fie, for shame! Hold your tongue—a passionate lover and five senses in perfection! When you are as mad as Valentine, I'll believe you love me, and the maddest shall take me.

VALENTINE. It is enough.—Ha, who's here?

MRS. FRAIL. (*Aside to* JEREMY) O Lord, her coming will spoil all!

JEREMY. (*Aside to* MRS. FRAIL) No, no, madam, he won't know her; if he should, I can persuade him.

VALENTINE. Scandal, who are these? Foreigners? If they are, I'll tell you what I think.—(*Whispers*) Get away all the company but Angelica, that I may discover my design to her.

SCANDAL. (*Whispers*) I will; I have discovered something of Tattle that is of a piece with Mrs. Frail. He courts Angelica; if we could contrive to couple 'em together—hark ye.

MRS. FORESIGHT. He won't know you, cousin; he knows nobody.

FORESIGHT. But he knows more than anybody. Oh, niece, he knows things past and to come, and all the profound secrets of time.

TATTLE. Look you, Mr. Foresight, it is not my way to make many words of matters, and so I shan't say much; but, in short, d'ye see, I will hold you a hundred pounds, now, that I know more secrets than he.

FORESIGHT. How! I cannot read that knowledge in your face, Mr. Tattle. Pray, what do you know?

TATTLE. Why, d'ye think I'll tell you, sir? Read it in my face! no, sir, 'tis written in my heart; and safer there, sir, than letters writ in juice of lemon, for no fire can fetch it out. I am no blab, sir.

VALENTINE. (*Aside to* SCANDAL) Acquaint Jeremy with it; he may easily bring it about. They are welcome, and I'll tell 'em so myself. [*Aloud*] What, do you look strange upon me? then I must be plain.—(*Coming up to them*) I am Truth, and hate an old acquaintance with a new face.

(SCANDAL *goes aside with* JEREMY)

TATTLE. Do you know me, Valentine?

VALENTINE. You?—who are you? No, I hope not.

TATTLE. I am Jack Tattle, your friend.

VALENTINE. My friend? what to do? I am no married man, and thou canst not lie with my wife; I am very poor, and thou canst not borrow money of me: then what employment have I for a friend?

TATTLE. Ha! a good open speaker, and not to be trusted with a secret.

ANGELICA. Do you know me, Valentine?

VALENTINE. Oh, very well.

ANGELICA. Who am I?

VALENTINE. You're a woman—one to whom Heaven gave beauty when it grafted roses on a briar. You are the reflection of Heaven in a pond, and he that leaps at you is sunk. You are all white—a sheet of lovely, spotless paper when you first are born; but you are to be scrawled and blotted by every goose's quill. I know you; for I loved a woman, and loved her so long that I found out a strange thing—I found out what a woman was good for.

TATTLE. Aye, prithee, what's that?

VALENTINE. Why, to keep a secret.

TATTLE. Oh, Lord!

VALENTINE. Oh, exceeding good to keep a secret; for tho' she should tell, yet she is not to be believed.

TATTLE. Hah! Good again, faith.

VALENTINE. I would have music.—Sing me the song that I like. [TATTLE *sings*]

SONG

(Set by Mr. Finger)

I tell thee, Charmion, could I time retrieve,
And could again begin to love and live,
To you I should my earliest off'ring give.

I know my eyes would lead my heart to you,
And I should all my vows and oaths renew;
But to be plain, I never would be true.

For by our weak and weary truth, I find,
Love hates to center in a point assign'd,
But runs with joy the circle of the mind.
Then never let us chain what should be free,
But for relief of either sex agree—
Since women love to change, and so do we.

VALENTINE. —No more, for I am melancholy. [*Walks musing*]

JEREMY. [*Aside to* SCANDAL] I'll do't, sir.

SCANDAL. Mr. Foresight, we had best leave him. He may grow outrageous and do mischief.

FORESIGHT. I will be directed by you.

JEREMY. [*To* MRS. FRAIL] You'll meet, madam? I'll take care everything shall be ready.

MRS. FRAIL. Thou shalt do what thou wilt, have what thou wilt—in short, I will deny you nothing.

TATTLE. (*To* ANGELICA) Madam, shall I wait upon you?

ANGELICA. No, I'll stay with him; Mr. Scandal will protect me.—Aunt, Mr. Tattle desires you would give him leave to wait on you.

TATTLE. (*Aside*) Pox on't! there's no coming off, now she has said that.—(*Aloud*) Madam, will you do me the honor?

MRS. FORESIGHT. Mr. Tattle might have used less ceremony.

Exeunt FORESIGHT, MRS. FRAIL, MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* TATTLE

SCANDAL. Jeremy, follow Tattle.

Exit JEREMY

ANGELICA. Mr. Scandal, I only stay till my maid comes, and because I had a mind to be rid of Mr. Tattle.

SCANDAL. Madam, I am very glad that I overheard a better reason, which you gave to Mr. Tattle; for his impertinence forced you to acknowledge a kindness for Valentine which you denied to all his sufferings and my solicitations. So I'll leave him to make use of the discovery, and your ladyship to the free confession of your inclinations.

ANGELICA. Oh, heavens! You won't leave me alone with a madman?

SCANDAL. No, madam, I only leave a madman to his remedy. *Exit* SCANDAL

VALENTINE. Madam, you need not be very much afraid, for I fancy I begin to come to myself.

ANGELICA. (*Aside*) Aye, but if I don't fit[1] you, I'll be hanged.

VALENTINE. You see what disguises love makes us put on: gods have been in counterfeited shapes for the same reason; and the divine part of me, my mind, has worn this mask of madness, and this motley livery, only as the slave of love and menial creature of your beauty.

ANGELICA. Mercy on me, how he talks! Poor Valentine!

VALENTINE. Nay, faith, now let us understand one another, hypocrisy apart. The comedy draws toward an end, and let us think of leaving acting, and be ourselves; and since you have loved me, you must own, I have at length deserved you should confess it.

ANGELICA. (*Sighs*) I would I had loved you!—for Heaven knows I pity you; and could I have foreseen the bad effects, I would have striven. But that's too late. (*Sighs*)

VALENTINE. What bad effects?—what's too late? My seeming madness has deceived my father, and procured me time to think of means to reconcile me to him, and preserve the right of my inheritance to his estate; which otherwise by articles I must this morning have resigned: and this I had informed you of to-day, but you were gone before I knew you had been here.

ANGELICA. How! I thought your love of me had caused this transport in your soul, which it seems you only counterfeited for mercenary ends and sordid interest!

VALENTINE. Nay, now you do me wrong; for if any interest was considered it was yours, since I thought I wanted more than love to make me worthy of you.

ANGELICA. Then you thought me mercenary.—But how am I deluded by this interval of sense, to reason with a madman!

[1] trick.

VALENTINE. Oh, 'tis barbarous to misunderstand me longer!

Enter JEREMY

ANGELICA. Oh, here's a reasonable creature—sure he will not have the impudence to persevere. Come, Jeremy, acknowledge your trick, and confess your master's madness counterfeit.

JEREMY. Counterfeit, madam! I'll maintain him to be as absolutely and substantially mad as any freeholder in Bethlehem, nay, he's as mad as any projector, fanatic, chemist,[1] lover, or poet in Europe.

VALENTINE. Sirrah, you lie! I am not mad.

ANGELICA. Ha! ha! ha! You see he denies it.

JEREMY. O Lord, madam, did you ever know any madman mad enough to own it?

VALENTINE. Sot, can't you apprehend?

ANGELICA. Why, he talk'd very sensibly just now.

JEREMY. Yes, madam, he has intervals; but you see he begins to look wild again now.

VALENTINE. Why, you thick-skulled rascal, I tell you the farce is done and I will be mad no longer. (*Beats him*)

ANGELICA. Ha, ha, ha!—Is he mad or no, Jeremy?

JEREMY. Partly, I think—for he does not know his mind two hours. I'm sure I left him just now in a humor to be mad, and I think I have not found him very quiet at this present.—(*Knocking without*) Who's there?

VALENTINE. Go see, you sot. (*Exit* JEREMY) I'm very glad that I can move your mirth, though not your compassion.

ANGELICA. I did not think you had apprehension enough to be exceptious. But madmen show themselves most by over-pretending to a sound understanding, as drunken men do by overacting sobriety. I was half inclining to believe you till I accidentally touched upon your tender part; but now you have restored me to my former opinion and compassion.

1 alchemist.

Enter JEREMY

JEREMY. Sir, your father has sent to know if you are any better yet.—Will you please to be mad, sir, or how?

VALENTINE. Stupidity! You know the penalty of all I'm worth must pay for the confession of my senses. I'm mad, and will be mad to everybody but this lady.

JEREMY. So! Just the very backside of Truth. But lying is a figure of speech that interlards the greatest part of my conversation.—(*Goes to the door*) Madam, your ladyship's woman. [*Exit* JEREMY]

Enter JENNY

ANGELICA. Well, have you been there?—Come hither.

JENNY. [*Aside*] Yes, madam, Sir Sampson will wait upon you presently.

VALENTINE. You are not leaving me in this uncertainty!

ANGELICA. Would anything but a madman complain of uncertainty? Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. Security is an insipid thing, and the overtaking and possessing of a wish discovers the folly of the chase. Never let us know one another better, for the pleasure of a masquerade is done when we come to show faces. But I'll tell you two things before I leave you; I am not the fool you take me for, and you are mad and don't know it.

Exeunt ANGELICA *and* JENNY

VALENTINE. From a riddle you can expect nothing but a riddle. There's my instruction and the moral of my lesson.

Re-enter JEREMY

JEREMY. What, is the lady gone again, sir? I hope you understood one another before you went.

VALENTINE. Understood! She is harder to be understood than a piece of Egyptian antiquity, or an Irish manuscript; you may pore till you spoil your eyes and not improve your knowledge.

JEREMY. I have heard 'em say, sir, they read hard Hebrew books backwards. Maybe you begin to read at the wrong end.

VALENTINE. They say so of a witch's prayer, and dreams and Dutch almanacs are to be understood by contraries. But there's regularity and method in that. She is a medal without a reverse or inscription, for indifference has both sides alike. Yet while she does not seem to hate me, I will pursue her and know her if it be possible in spite of the opinion of my satirical friend, Scandal, who says

The women are like tricks by sleight of hand,
Which, to admire, we should not understand.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT V

[SCENE I.] *A room in* FORESIGHT'S *house*

Enter ANGELICA *and* JENNY

ANGELICA. Where is Sir Sampson? Did you not tell me he would be here before me?

JENNY. He's at the great glass in the dining-room, madam, setting his cravat and wig.

ANGELICA. How! I'm glad on't. If he has a mind I should like him, it's a sign he likes me; and that's more than half my design.

JENNY. I hear him, madam.

ANGELICA. Leave me; and d'ye hear, if Valentine should come or send, I am not to be spoken with. *Exit* JENNY

Enter SIR SAMPSON

SIR SAMPSON. I have not been honored with the commands of a fair lady a great while—odd, madam, you have revived me! —not since I was five-and-thirty.

ANGELICA. Why, you have no great reason to complain, Sir Sampson; that is not long ago.

SIR SAMPSON. Zooks, but it is, madam, a very great while to a man that admires a fine woman as much as I do.

ANGELICA. You're an absolute courtier, Sir Sampson.

SIR SAMPSON. Not at all, madam. Odsbud, you wrong me; I am not so old neither to be a bare courtier, only a man of words. Odd, I have warm blood about me yet, and can serve a lady any way.—Come, come, let me tell you, you women think a man old too soon; faith and troth, you do!—Come, don't despise fifty; odd, fifty, in a hale constitution, is no such contemptible age.

ANGELICA. Fifty a contemptible age! Not at all—a very fashionable age, I think.—I assure you, I know very considerable beaux that set a good face upon fifty.—Fifty! I have seen fifty in a side-box, by candlelight, outblossom five-and-twenty.

SIR SAMPSON. Oh, pox! Outsides, outsides! A pize take 'em, mere outsides! Hang your side-box beaux! No, I'm none of those, none of your forced trees, that pretend to blossom in the fall, and bud when they should bring forth fruit. I am of a long-lived race, and inherit vigor: none of my ancestors married till fifty, yet they begot sons and daughters till fourscore. I am of your patriarchs, I, a branch of one of your antediluvian families, fellows that the flood could not wash away. Well, madam, what are your commands? Has any young rogue affronted you, and shall I cut his throat? or—

ANGELICA. No, Sir Sampson, I have no quarrel upon my hands—I have more occasion for your conduct than your courage at this time. To tell you the truth, I'm weary of living single, and want a husband.

SIR SAMPSON. Odsbud, and 'tis pity you should!—(*Aside*) Odd, would she would like me, then I should hamper my young rogues: odd, would she would!—Faith and troth, she's devilish handsome!—(*Aloud*) Madam, you deserve a good husband, and 'twere pity you should be thrown away upon any of these young idle rogues about the town. Odd, there's ne'er a young fellow worth hanging! —that is, a very young fellow. Pize on 'em! they never think beforehand of anything, and if they commit matrimony, 'tis as they

commit murder—out of a frolic, and are ready to hang themselves, or to be hanged by the law, the next morning. Odso, have a care, madam.

ANGELICA. Therefore I ask your advice, Sir Sampson. I have fortune enough to make any man easy that I can like. If there were such a thing as a young, agreeable man, with a reasonable stock of good nature and sense—for I would neither have an absolute wit nor a fool.

SIR SAMPSON. Odd, you are hard to please, madam; to find a young fellow that is neither a wit in his own eye, nor a fool in the eye of the world, is a very hard task. But, faith and troth, you speak very discreetly; for I hate both a wit and a fool.

ANGELICA. She that marries a fool, Sir Sampson, commits the reputation of her honesty or understanding to the censure of the world; and she that marries a very witty man submits both to the severity and insolent conduct of her husband. I should like a man of wit for a lover, because I would have such an one in my power. But I would no more be his wife than his enemy, for his malice is not a more terrible consequence of his aversion than his jealousy is of his love.

SIR SAMPSON. None of old Foresight's sibyls ever uttered such a truth. Odsbud, you have won my heart. I hate a wit; I had a son that was spoiled among 'em—a good hopeful lad till he learned to be a wit, and might have risen in the state—but, a pox on't! his wit run him out of his money, and now his poverty has run him out of his wits.

ANGELICA. Sir Sampson, as your friend I must tell you, you are very much abused in that matter. He's no more mad than you are.

SIR SAMPSON. [*Aside*] Odsbud, I believe she likes me. [*Aloud*] Ah, madam, all my affairs are scarce worthy to be laid at your feet; and I wish, madam, they stood in a better posture that I might make a more becoming offer to a lady of your incomparable beauty and merit. If I had Peru in one hand and Mexico in t'other, and the Eastern empire under my feet, it would make me only a more glorious victim to be offered at the shrine of your beauty.

ANGELICA. Bless me, Sir Sampson, what's the matter?

SIR SAMPSON. Odd, madam, I love you.—And if you would take my advice in a husband—

ANGELICA. Hold, hold, Sir Sampson! I asked your advice for a husband, and you are giving me your consent. I was, indeed, thinking to propose something like it in a jest, to satisfy you about Valentine; for if a match were seemingly carried on between you and me, it would oblige him to throw off his disguise of madness in apprehension of losing me—for you know he has long pretended a passion for me.

SIR SAMPSON. Gadzooks, a most ingenious contrivance if we were to go through with it! But why must the match only be seemingly carried on? Odd, let it be a real contract!

ANGELICA. Oh, fie, Sir Sampson, what would the world say?

SIR SAMPSON. Say? They would say you were a wise woman and I a happy man. Odd, madam, I'll love you as long as I live, and leave you a good jointure when I die.

ANGELICA. Aye, but that is not in your power, Sir Sampson; for when Valentine confesses himself in his senses, he must make over his inheritance to his younger brother.

SIR SAMPSON. Odd, you're cunning—a wary baggage! Faith and troth, I like you the better!—But, I warrant you, I have a proviso in the obligation in favor of myself; body o' me, I have a trick to turn the settlement upon the issue male of our two bodies begotten. Odsbud, let us find children, and I'll find an estate!

ANGELICA. Will you? Well, do you find the estate, and leave the t'other to me—

SIR SAMPSON. Oh, rogue!—But I'll trust you. And will you consent?—Is it a match then?

ANGELICA. Let me consult my lawyer concerning this obligation; and if I find what you propose practicable, I'll give you my answer.

SIR SAMPSON. With all my heart: come in with me, and I'll lend you the bond.—You shall consult your lawyer, and I'll consult a parson. Odzooks, I'm a young man! odzooks, I'm a young man, and I'll make it appear. Odd, you're devilish handsome: faith and troth, you're very handsome—and I'm very young, and very lusty. Odsbud, hussy, you know how to choose, and so do I. Odd, I think we are very well met. Give me your hand; odd, let me kiss it. 'Tis as warm and as soft—as what?—odd, as t'other hand. Give me t'other hand, and I'll mumble 'em and kiss 'em till they melt in my mouth.

ANGELICA. Hold, Sir Sampson. You're profuse of your vigor before your time: you'll spend your estate before you come to it.

SIR SAMPSON. No, no, only give you a rent-roll of my possessions—ha! baggage! —I warrant you, for little Sampson. Odd, Sampson's a very good name for an able fellow; your Sampsons were strong dogs from the beginning.

ANGELICA. Have a care, and don't overact your part. If you remember, the strongest Sampson of your name pulled an old house over his head at last.

SIR SAMPSON. Say you so, hussy? Come, let's go then. Odd, I long to be pulling down too; come away.—Odso, here's somebody coming. *Exeunt*

Enter TATTLE *and* JEREMY

TATTLE. Is not that she, gone out just now?

JEREMY. Aye, sir, she's just going to the place of appointment. Ah, sir, if you are not very faithful and close in this business, you'll certainly be the death of a person that has a most extraordinary passion for your honor's service.

TATTLE. Aye, who's that?

JEREMY. Even my unworthy self, sir. Sir, I have had an appetite to be fed with your commands a great while; and now, sir, my former master having much troubled the fountain of his understanding, it is a very plausible occasion for me to quench my thirst at the spring of your bounty. I thought I could not recommend myself better to you, sir, than by the delivery of a great beauty and fortune into your arms, whom I have heard you sigh for.

TATTLE. I'll make thy fortune; say no more. Thou art a pretty fellow, and canst carry a message to a lady in a pretty soft kind of phrase, and with a good persuading accent.

JEREMY. Sir, I have the seeds of rhetoric and oratory in my head; I have been at Cambridge.

TATTLE. Aye! 'Tis well enough for a servant to be bred at a university, but the education is a little too pedantic for a gentleman. I hope you are secret in your nature—private, close, ha?

JEREMY. O sir, for that, sir, 'tis my chief talent. I'm as secret as the head of Nilus.

TATTLE. Aye! Who's he, though? a privy counsellor?

JEREMY. (*Aside*) O ignorance!—(*Aloud*) A cunning Egyptian, sir, that with his arms would overrun the country; yet nobody could ever find out his headquarters.

TATTLE. Close dog! a good whoremaster, I warrant him. The time draws nigh, Jeremy. Angelica will be veiled like a nun, and I must be hooded like a friar.—Ha, Jeremy?

JEREMY. Aye, sir, hooded like a hawk, to seize at first sight upon the quarry. It is the whim of my master's madness to be so dressed; and she is so in love with him, she'll comply with anything to please him. Poor lady, I'm sure she'll have reason to pray for me when she finds what a happy exchange she has made between a madman and so accomplished a gentleman.

TATTLE. Aye, so she will, Jeremy. You're a good friend to her, poor creature. I swear I do it hardly so much in consideration of myself as compassion to her.

JEREMY. 'Tis an act of charity, sir, to save a fine woman with thirty thousand pound from throwing herself away.

TATTLE. So 'tis, faith! I might have saved several others in my time; but egad, I could never find in my heart to marry anybody before.

JEREMY. Well, sir, I'll go and tell her my master's coming, and meet you in half a quarter of an hour with your disguise, at your own lodgings. You must talk a little madly: she won't distinguish the tone of your voice.

TATTLE. No, no! Let me alone for a counterfeit—I'll be ready for you!

Enter MISS [PRUE]

PRUE. Oh, Mr. Tattle, are you here?—I'm glad I have found you. I have been looking up and down for you like anything till I'm as tired as anything in the world.

TATTLE. [*Aside*] Oh, pox, how shall I get rid of this foolish girl?

PRUE. Oh, I have pure news! I can tell you pure news; I must not marry the seaman now—my father says so. Why won't you be my husband?—You say you love me—and you won't be my husband. And I know you may be my husband now if you please.

TATTLE. O fie, miss! Who told you so, child?

PRUE. Why, my father; I told him that you loved me.

TATTLE. O fie, miss! Why did you do so? and who told you so, child?

[PRUE.] Who? Why, you did. Did not you?

TATTLE. O pox, that was yesterday, miss; that was a great while ago, child. I have been asleep since—slept a whole night, and did not so much as dream of the matter.

PRUE. Pshaw!—Oh, but I dream't it was so tho'!

TATTLE. Aye, but your father will tell you that dreams come by contraries, child. O fie! What, we must not love one another now!—Pshaw, that would be a foolish thing indeed.—Fie, fie; you're a woman now, and must think of a new man every morning and forget him every night. No, no! To marry is to be a child again, and to play with the same rattle always. O fie, marrying is a paw[1] thing.

PRUE. Well, but don't you love me as well as you did last night, then?

TATTLE. No, no, child; you would not have me.

PRUE. No?—Yes, but I would tho'!

TATTLE. Pshaw! But I tell you, you would not. You forget you're a woman and don't know your own mind.

Enter FORESIGHT

FORESIGHT. Oh, Mr. Tattle, your servant! You are a close man, but methinks your love to my daughter was a secret I might have been trusted with—or had you a mind to try if I could discover it by my art?—Hum, ha! I think there is something in your physiognomy that has a resemblance of her, and the girl is like me.

TATTLE. And so you would infer that you and I are alike.—[*Aside*] What does the old prig mean? I'll banter him, and laugh at him, and leave him. [*Aloud*] I fancy you have a wrong notion of faces.

FORESIGHT. How—what? a wrong notion? How so?

TATTLE. In the way of art. I have some taking features, not obvious to vulgar eyes, that are indications of a sudden turn of good fortune in the lottery of wives, and promise a great beauty and great fortune reserved alone for me, by a private intrigue of destiny, kept secret from the piercing eye of perspicuity—from all astrologers and the stars themselves.

FORESIGHT. How! I will make it appear that what you say is impossible.

TATTLE. Sir, I beg your pardon, I'm in haste—

FORESIGHT. For what?

TATTLE. To be married, sir—married.

FORESIGHT. Aye, but pray take me along with you,[2] sir.

TATTLE. No, sir; 'tis to be done privately. I never make confidants.

FORESIGHT. Well, but my consent, I mean.—You won't marry my daughter without my consent?

1 improper.

2 Let me understand you.

TATTLE. Who—I, sir? I'm an absolute stranger to you and your daughter, sir.

FORESIGHT. Heyday! what time of the moon is this?

TATTLE. Very true, sir, and desire to continue so. I have no more love for your daughter than I have likeness of you; and I have a secret in my heart which you would be glad to know, and shan't know—and yet you shall know it too, and be sorry for't afterwards. I'd have you to know, sir, that I am as knowing as the stars, and as secret as the night. And I'm going to be married just now, yet did not know of it half an hour ago; and the lady stays for me, and does not know of it yet. There's a mystery for you!—I know you love to untie difficulties.—Or if you can't solve this, stay here a quarter of an hour, and I'll come and explain it to you. *Exit*

PRUE. O father, why will you let him go? Won't you make him be my husband?

FORESIGHT. Mercy on us! What do these lunacies portend?—Alas! he's mad, child, stark wild.

PRUE. What, and must not I have e'er a husband then? What, must I go to bed to nurse again, and be a child as long as she's an old woman? Indeed, but I won't; for now my mind is set upon a man, I will have a man some way or other. Oh! methinks I'm sick when I think of a man, and if I can't have one I would go to sleep all my life. For when I'm awake, it makes me wish and long, and I don't know for what: and I'd rather be always asleep, than sick with thinking.

FORESIGHT. Oh, fearful! I think the girl's influenced[1] too.—Hussy, you shall have a rod.

PRUE. A fiddle of a rod! I'll have a husband: and if you won't get me one, I'll get one for myself. I'll marry our Robin the butler. He says he loves me, and he's a handsome man, and shall be my husband. I warrant he'll be my husband, and thank me too, for he told me so.

Enter SCANDAL, MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* Nurse

FORESIGHT. [*Aside*] Did he so? I'll dispatch him for't presently; rogue! [*Aloud*] Oh, nurse, come hither.

NURSE. What is your worship's pleasure?

FORESIGHT. Here, take your young mistress, and lock her up presently, till farther orders from me.—Not a word, hussy. Do what I bid you—no reply. Away! And bid Robin make ready to give an account of his plate and linen, d'ye hear? Begone when I bid you. [*Exit* PRUE]

MRS. FORESIGHT. What's the matter, husband?

FORESIGHT. 'Tis not convenient to tell you now.—Mr. Scandal, Heaven keep us all in our senses!—I fear there is a contagious frenzy abroad. How does Valentine?

SCANDAL. Oh, I hope he will do well again. I have a message from him to your niece Angelica.

FORESIGHT. I think she has not returned since she went abroad with Sir Sampson.

Exit Nurse

Enter BEN

MRS. FORESIGHT. Here's Mr. Benjamin; he can tell us if his father be come home.

BEN. Who, father? Aye, he's come home with a vengeance.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Why? What's the matter?

BEN. Matter! Why, he's mad!

FORESIGHT. Mercy on us! I was afraid of this.

BEN. And there's the handsome young woman—she as they say brother Val went mad for—she's mad too, I think.

FORESIGHT. Oh, my poor niece, my poor niece—is she gone too? Well, I shall run mad next.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Well, but how gone mad?—How d'ye mean?

BEN. Nay, I'll give you leave to guess. I'll take a voyage to Antegoa[2]—no, hold, I mayn't say so neither—but I'll sail as far

[1] By an evil planet.

[2] Antigua.

as Ligorn[1] and back again before you shall guess at the matter, and do nothing else. Mess, you may take in all the points of the compass and not hit right.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Your experiment will take up a little too much time.

BEN. Why then, I'll tell you. There's a new wedding upon the stocks, and they two are going to be married to rights.

SCANDAL. Who?

BEN. Why, father and—the young woman. I can't hit her name.

SCANDAL. Angelica?

BEN. Aye, the same.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Sir Sampson and Angelica? Impossible!

BEN. That may be—but I'm sure it is as I tell you.

SCANDAL. 'Sdeath! It's a jest! I can't believe it.

BEN. Look you, friend; it's nothing to me whether you believe it or no. What I say is true. D'ye see, they are married, or just going to be married—I know not which.

FORESIGHT. Well, but they are not mad?—that is, not lunatic?

BEN. I don't know what you call madness; but she's mad for a husband, and he's horn-mad, I think, or they'd ne'er make a match together.—Here they come.

Enter SIR SAMPSON, ANGELICA, [*and*] BUCKRAM

SIR SAMPSON. Where is this old soothsayer, this uncle of mine elect?—Aha! old Foresight, Uncle Foresight! Wish me joy, Uncle Foresight, double joy, both as uncle and astrologer; here's a conjunction that was not foretold in all your ephemeris. The brightest star in the blue firmament—is *shot from above in a jelly of love*, and so forth; and I'm lord of the ascendant. Odd, you're an old fellow, Foresight—uncle, I mean—a very old fellow, Uncle Foresight; and yet you shall live to dance at my wedding—faith and troth you shall. Odd, we'll have the music of the spheres for thee, old Lilly, that we will, and thou shalt lead up a dance *in via lactea*![2]

FORESIGHT. I'm thunderstruck!—You are not married to my niece?

SIR SAMPSON. Not absolutely married, uncle, but very near it; within a kiss of the matter, as you see. (*Kisses* ANGELICA)

ANGELICA. 'Tis very true, indeed, uncle; I hope you'll be my father, and give me.

SIR SAMPSON. That he shall, or I'll burn his globes. Body o' me, he shall be thy father! I'll make him thy father, and thou shalt make me a father, and I'll make thee a mother, and we'll beget sons and daughters enough to put the weekly bills[3] out of countenance.

SCANDAL. Death and hell! where's Valentine? *Exit* [SCANDAL]

MRS. FORESIGHT. This is so surprising—

SIR SAMPSON. How! What does my aunt say? Surprising, aunt! Not at all. For a young couple to make a match in winter?—not at all.—It's a plot to undermine cold weather, and destroy that usurper of a bed called a warming-pan.

MRS. FORESIGHT. I'm glad to hear you have so much fire in you, Sir Sampson.

BEN. Mess, I fear his fire's little better than tinder; mayhap it will only serve to light up a match for somebody else. The young woman's a handsome young woman, I can't deny it; but, father, if I might be your pilot in this case, you should not marry her. It's just the same thing as if so be you should sail so far as the Straits without provision.

SIR SAMPSON. Who gave you authority to speak, sirrah? To your element, fish!—Be mute, fish, and to sea! Rule your helm, sirrah; don't direct me.

BEN. Well, well, take you care of your own helm, or you mayn't keep your new vessel steady.

SIR SAMPSON. Why, you impudent tarpaulin! sirrah, do you bring your forecastle jests upon your father? But I shall be even with you; I won't give you a groat.—Mr. Buck-

[1] Leghorn.

[2] in the Milky Way.

[3] Lists of births and deaths.

ram, is the conveyance so worded that nothing can possibly descend to this scoundrel? I would not so much as have him have the prospect of an estate, though there were no way to come to it but by the north-east passage.

BUCKRAM. Sir, it is drawn according to your directions; there is not the least cranny of the law unstopped.

BEN. Lawyer, I believe there's many a cranny and leak unstopped in your conscience.—If so be that one had a pump to your bosom, I believe we should discover a foul hold. They say a witch will sail in a sieve, but I believe the devil would not venture aboard o' your conscience.—And that's for you.

SIR SAMPSON. Hold your tongue, sirrah!—How now! Who's here?

Enter TATTLE *and* MRS. FRAIL

MRS. FRAIL. O sister, the most unlucky accident!

MRS. FORESIGHT. What's the matter?

TATTLE. Oh, the two most unfortunate poor creatures in the world we are!

FORESIGHT. Bless us! How so?

MRS. FRAIL. Ah, Mr. Tattle and I, poor Mr. Tattle and I are—I can't speak it out.

TATTLE. Nor I—but poor Mrs. Frail and I are—

MRS. FRAIL. Married.

MRS. FORESIGHT. Married! How?

TATTLE. Suddenly—before we knew where we were—that villain Jeremy, by the help of disguises, tricked us into one another.

FORESIGHT. Why, you told me just now you went hence in haste to be married.

ANGELICA. But I believe Mr. Tattle meant the favor to me: I thank him.

TATTLE. I did, as I hope to be saved, madam; my intentions were good. But this is the most cruel thing—to marry one does not know how, nor why, nor wherefore.—The devil take me if ever I was so much concerned at anything in my life!

ANGELICA. 'Tis very unhappy if you don't care for one another.

TATTLE. The least in the world—that is, for my part; I speak for myself. Gad, I never had the least thought of serious kindness—I never liked anybody less in my life. Poor woman! Gad, I'm sorry for her, too; for I have no reason to hate her neither. But I believe I shall lead her a damned sort of life.

MRS. FORESIGHT. (*Aside to* MRS. FRAIL) He's better than no husband at all—though he's a coxcomb.

MRS. FRAIL. (*Aside to* MRS. FORESIGHT) Aye, aye, it's well it's no worse.—(*Aloud*) Nay, for my part I always despised Mr. Tattle of all things; nothing but his being my husband could have made me like him less.

TATTLE. Look you there, I thought as much!—Pox on't, I wish we could keep it secret! Why, I don't believe any of this company would speak of it.

MRS. FRAIL. But, my dear, that's impossible; the parson and that rogue Jeremy will publish it.

TATTLE. Aye, my dear, so they will, as you say.

ANGELICA. Oh, you'll agree very well in a little time; custom will make it easy to you.

TATTLE. Easy! Pox on't! I don't believe I shall sleep to-night.

SIR SAMPSON. Sleep, quotha!—no. Why, you would not sleep o' your wedding night! I'm an older fellow than you, and don't mean to sleep.

BEN. Why, there's another match now, as tho'f a couple of privateers were looking for a prize and should fall foul of one another. I'm sorry for the young man, with all my heart. Look you, friend, if I may advise you; when she's going—for that you must expect, I have experience of her—when she's going, let her go. For no matrimony is tough enough to hold her, and if she can't drag her anchor along with her, she'll break her cable, I can tell you that.—Who's here? The madman!

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *and* JEREMY

VALENTINE. No, here's the fool; and, if occasion be, I'll give it under my hand.

SIR SAMPSON. How now!

VALENTINE. Sir, I'm come to acknowledge my errors, and ask your pardon.

SIR SAMPSON. What, have you found your senses at last then? in good time, sir.

VALENTINE. You were abused, sir; I never was distracted.

FORESIGHT. How, not mad! Mr. Scandal?

SCANDAL. No, really, sir. I'm his witness, it was all counterfeit.

VALENTINE. I thought I had reasons.—But it was a poor contrivance; the effect has shown it such.

SIR SAMPSON. Contrivance! What, to cheat me? to cheat your father? Sirrah, could you hope to prosper?

VALENTINE. Indeed, I thought, sir, when the father endeavored to undo the son, it was a reasonable return of nature.

SIR SAMPSON. Very good, sir!—Mr. Buckram, are you ready?—(*To* VALENTINE) Come, sir, will you sign and seal?

VALENTINE. If you please, sir; but first I would ask this lady one question.

SIR SAMPSON. Sir, you must ask me leave first.—That lady! No, sir; you shall ask that lady no questions till you have asked her blessing, sir. That lady is to be my wife.

VALENTINE. I have heard as much, sir, but I would have it from her own mouth.

SIR SAMPSON. That's as much as to say, I lie, sir, and you don't believe what I say.

VALENTINE. Pardon me, sir, but I reflect that I very lately counterfeited madness. I don't know but the frolic may go round.

SIR SAMPSON. Come, chuck,—satisfy him, answer him.—Come, come, Mr. Buckram, the pen and ink.

BUCKRAM. Here it is, sir, with the deed; all is ready.

(VALENTINE *goes to* ANGELICA)

ANGELICA. 'Tis true, you have a great while pretended love to me. Nay, what if you were sincere; still you must pardon me if I think my own inclinations have a better right to dispose of my person than yours.

SIR SAMPSON. Are you answered now, sir?

VALENTINE. Yes, sir.

SIR SAMPSON. Where's your plot, sir?—and your contrivance now, sir? Will you sign, sir?—Come, will you sign and seal?

VALENTINE. With all my heart, sir.

SCANDAL. 'Sdeath, you are not mad indeed, to ruin yourself?

VALENTINE. I have been disappointed of my only hope, and he that loses hope may part with anything. I never valued fortune but as it was subservient to my pleasure, and my only pleasure was to please this lady. I have made many vain attempts, and find at last that nothing but my ruin can effect it; which, for that reason, I will sign to.—Give me the paper.

ANGELICA. (*Aside*) Generous Valentine!

BUCKRAM. Here is the deed, sir.

VALENTINE. But where is the bond by which I am obliged to sign this?

BUCKRAM. Sir Sampson, you have it.

ANGELICA. No, *I* have it; and I'll use it as I would everything that is an enemy to Valentine. (*Tears the paper*)

SIR SAMPSON. How now!

VALENTINE. Ha!

ANGELICA. (*To* VALENTINE) Had I the world to give you, it could not make me worthy of so generous and faithful a passion. Here's my hand; my heart was always yours, and struggled very hard to make this utmost trial of your virtue.

VALENTINE. Between pleasure and amazement, I am lost.—But on my knees I take the blessing.

SIR SAMPSON. Oons, what is the meaning of this?

BEN. Mess, here's the wind changed again! Father, you and I may make a voyage together now.

ANGELICA. Well, Sir Sampson, since I have played you a trick, I'll advise you how you may avoid such another. Learn to be a good father, or you'll never get a second wife. I always loved your son, and hated your unforgiving nature. I was resolved to try him to the utmost; I have tried you too, and know you both. You have not more faults than he has virtues, and 'tis hardly

more pleasure to me that I can make him and myself happy, than that I can punish you.

VALENTINE. If my happiness could receive addition, this kind surprise would make it double.

SIR SAMPSON. Oons, you're a crocodile!

FORESIGHT. Really, Sir Sampson, this is a sudden eclipse.

SIR SAMPSON. You're an illiterate old fool, and I'm another! *Exit*

TATTLE. If the gentleman is in disorder for want of a wife, I can spare him mine.—(*To* JEREMY) Oh, are you there, sir? I'm indebted to you for my happiness.

JEREMY. Sir, I ask you ten thousand pardons; 'twas an arrant mistake.—You see, sir, my master was never mad nor anything like it—then how could it be otherwise?

VALENTINE. Tattle, I thank you. You would have interposed between me and Heaven, but Providence laid purgatory in your way. You have but justice.

SCANDAL. I hear the fiddles that Sir Sampson provided for his own wedding; methinks 'tis pity they should not be employed when the match is so much mended.—Valentine, though it be morning, we may have a dance.

VALENTINE. Anything, my friend—everything that looks like joy and transport.

SCANDAL. Call 'em, Jeremy.

Exit JEREMY

ANGELICA. I have done dissembling now, Valentine, and if that coldness which I have always worn before you should turn to an extreme fondness, you must not suspect it.

VALENTINE. I'll prevent that suspicion; for I intend to dote [to] that immoderate degree that your fondness shall never distinguish itself enough to be taken notice of. If ever you seem to love too much, it must be only when I can't love enough.

ANGELICA. Have a care of promises; you know you are apt to run more in debt than you are able to pay.

VALENTINE. Therefore I yield my body as your prisoner, and make your best on't.

SCANDAL. [*To* VALENTINE] The music stays for you. [*A dance is sounded*] [*To* ANGELICA] Well, madam, you have done exemplary justice in punishing an inhuman father and rewarding a faithful lover. But there is a third good work which I, in particular, must thank you for; I was an infidel to your sex, and you have converted me.—For now I am convinced that all women are not like Fortune, blind in bestowing favors, either on those who do not merit or who do not want 'em.

ANGELICA. 'Tis an unreasonable accusation that you lay upon our sex: you tax us with injustice, only to cover your own want of merit. You would all have the reward of love, but few have the constancy to stay till it becomes your due. Men are generally hypocrites and infidels; they pretend to worship, but have neither zeal nor faith. How few, like Valentine, would persevere even to martyrdom, and sacrifice their interest to their constancy! In admiring me you misplace the novelty:[1]—

The miracle to-day is that we find
A lover true, not that a woman's kind.

Exeunt Omnes

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW HOUSE

Sure Providence at first designed this place
To be the player's refuge in distress;
For still in every storm they all run hither,
As to a shed that shields 'em from the weather.
But thinking of this change which last befell us,
It's like what I have heard our poets tell us:
For when behind our scenes their suits are pleading,
To help their love sometimes they show their reading;
And wanting ready cash to pay for hearts,
They top[2] their learning on us and their parts.
Once of philosophers they told us stories,

1 consider the normal woman unusual.
2 impose.

Whom, as I think, they called—Py—
Pythagories;
I'm sure 'tis some such *Latin* name they
give 'em,
And we, who know no better, must believe
'em.
Now to these men (say they) such souls
were given,
That after death ne'er went to hell nor
heaven,
But lived, I know not how, in beasts; and
then,
When many years were passed, in men
again.
Methinks, we players resemble such a soul;
That does from bodies, we from houses stroll.
Thus Aristotle's soul, of old that was,
May now be damned to animate an ass;
Or in this very house, for aught we know,
Is doing painful penance in some beau:
And thus, our audience, which did once
resort
To shining theatres to see our sport,
Now find us tossed into a tennis-court.
These walls but t'other day were filled with
noise
Of roaring gamesters, and your *damn-me* boys;
Then bounding balls and rackets they en-
compast,
And now they're filled with jests, and flights,
and bombast!
I vow, I don't much like this transmi-
gration,
Strolling from place to place by circu-
lation;
Grant, Heaven, we don't return to our first
station!
I know not what these think, but, for
my part,
I can't reflect without an aching heart
How we should end in our original, a cart.[1]
But we can't fear, since you're so good to
save us
That you have only set us up—to leave us.
Thus from the past, we hope for future
grace;
I beg it—
And some here know I have a begging face.
Then pray continue this your kind behavior,
For a clear stage won't do without your
favor.

1 As in the days of Thespis.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

A Comedy by William Congreve

Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui mœchos non vultis, [*ut omni parte laborent*].

. . . *metuat doti deprensa.*

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ]

Fainall, in love with Mrs. Marwood
Mirabell, in love with Mrs. Millamant
Witwoud, Petulant } followers of Mrs. Millamant
Sir Wilfull Witwoud, half-brother to Witwoud, and nephew to Lady Wishfort
Waitwell, servant to Mirabell
Coachmen, Dancers, Footmen, and Attendants
Lady Wishfort, enemy to Mirabell, for having falsely pretended love to her
Mrs. Millamant, a fine lady, niece to Lady Wishfort, and loves Mirabell
Mrs. Marwood, friend to Mr. Fainall, and likes Mirabell
Mrs. Fainall, daughter to Lady Wishfort, and wife to Fainall, formerly friend to Mirabell
Foible, woman to Lady Wishfort
Mincing, woman to Mrs. Millamant
[Betty, waiting-maid at a chocolate-house]
[Peg, maid to Lady Wishfort]
[Singer]

Scene: *London*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

[DEDICATION][1]

To the Right Honorable Ralph, Earl of Montague, etc.

My Lord,

Whether the world will arraign me of vanity or not, that I have presumed to dedicate this comedy to your Lordship, I am yet in doubt; though, it may be, it is some degree of vanity even to doubt of it. One who has at any time had the honor of your Lordship's conversation, cannot be supposed to think very meanly of that which he would prefer to your perusal; yet it were to incur the imputation of too much sufficiency, to pretend to such a merit as might abide the test of your Lordship's censure.

Whatever value may be wanting to this play while yet it is mine, will be sufficiently made up to it when it is once become your Lordship's; and it is my security that I cannot have overrated it more by my dedication, than your Lordship will dignify it by your patronage.

That it succeeded on the stage, was almost beyond my expectation; for but little of it was prepared for that general taste which seems now to be predominant in the palates of our audience.

Those characters which are meant to be ridiculed in most of our comedies, are of fools so gross, that, in my humble opinion, they should rather disturb than divert the well-natured and reflecting part of an audience; they are rather objects of charity than contempt; and instead of moving our mirth, they ought very often to excite our compassion.

This reflection moved me to design some characters which should appear ridiculous, not so much through a natural folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the stage) as through an affected wit; a wit which at the same time that it is affected, is also false. As there is some difficulty in the formation of a character of this nature, so there is some hazard which attends the progress of its success upon the stage; for many come to a play so overcharged with criticism, that they very often let fly their censure, when through their rashness they have mistaken their aim. This I had occasion lately to observe; for this play had been acted two or three days before some of these hasty judges

[1] Steele's commendatory verses are not in the quarto.

could find the leisure to distinguish betwixt the character of a Witwoud and a Truewit.

I must beg your Lordship's pardon for this digression from the true course of this epistle; but that it may not seem altogether impertinent, I beg that I may plead the occasion of it, in part of that excuse of which I stand in need, for recommending this comedy to your protection. It is only by the countenance of your Lordship and the *few* so qualified, that such who wrote with care and pains can hope to be distinguished; for the prostituted name of *poet* promiscuously levels all that bear it.

Terence, the most correct writer in the world, had a Scipio and a Lælius, if not to assist him, at least to support him in his reputation; and notwithstanding his extraordinary merit, it may be their countenance was not more than necessary.

The purity of his style, the delicacy of his turns, and the justness of his characters, were all of them beauties which the greater part of his audience were incapable of tasting; some of the coarsest strokes of Plautus, so severely censured by Horace, were more likely to affect the multitude—such who come with expectation to laugh at the last act of a play, and are better entertained with two or three unseasonable jests, than with the artful solution of the *fable.*

As Terence excelled in his performances, so had he great advantages to encourage his undertakings; for he built most on the foundations of Menander; his plots were generally modelled, and his characters ready drawn to his hand. He copied Menander, and Menander had no less light in the formation of his characters, from the observations of Theophrastus, of whom he was a disciple; and Theophrastus, it is known, was not only the disciple, but the immediate successor, of Aristotle, the first and greatest judge of poetry. These were great models to design by; and the further advantage which Terence possessed, towards giving his plays the due ornaments of purity of style and justness of manners, was not less considerable, from the freedom of conversation which was permitted him with Lælius and Scipio, two of the greatest and most polite men of his age. And indeed the privilege of such a conversation is the only certain means of attaining to the perfection of dialogue.

If it has happened in any part of this comedy that I have gained a turn of style or expression more correct, or at least, more corrigible, than in those which I have formerly written, I must, with equal pride and gratitude, ascribe it to honor of your Lordship's admitting me into your conversation, and that of a society where everybody else was so well worthy of you, in your retirement last summer from the town; for it was immediately after that this comedy was written. If I have failed in my performance, it is only to be regretted, where there were so many not inferior either to a Scipio or a Lælius, that there should be one wanting equal in capacity to a Terence.

If I am not mistaken, poetry is almost the only art which has not yet laid claim to your Lordship's patronage. Architecture and painting, to the great honor of our country, have flourished under your influence and protection. In the meantime, poetry, the eldest sister of all arts, and parent of most, seems to have resigned her birthright, by having neglected to pay her duty to your Lordship, and by permitting others of a later extraction to prepossess that place in your esteem to which none can pretend a better title. Poetry, in its nature, is sacred to the good and great; the relation between them is reciprocal, and they are ever propitious to it. It is the privilege of poetry to address to them, and it is their prerogative alone to give it protection.

This received maxim is a general apology for all writers who consecrate their labors to great men: but I could wish at this time, that this address were exempted from the common pretence of all dedications; and that I can distinguish your Lordship even among the most deserving, so this offering might become remarkable by some particular instance of respect which should assure your Lordship, that I am, with all due sense of your extreme worthiness and humanity, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient, and most obliged humble servant,

Will. Congreve

PROLOGUE

Of those few fools who with ill stars are cursed,
Sure scribbling fools, called poets, fare the worst:
For they're a sort of fools which Fortune makes,
And after she has made 'em fools, forsakes.
With Nature's oafs 'tis quite a different case,
For Fortune favors all her idiot-race.

In her own nest the cuckoo-eggs we find,
O'er which she broods to hatch the changeling-kind.
Nor portion for her own she has to spare,
So much she dotes on her adopted care.

Poets are bubbles, by the town drawn in,
Suffered at first some trifling stakes to win;
But what unequal hazards do they run!
Each time they write they venture all they've won:
The squire that's buttered[1] still, is sure to be undone.
This author heretofore has found your favor;
But pleads no merit from his past behavior.
To build on that might prove a vain presumption,
Should grants, to poets made, admit resumption:
And in Parnassus he must lose his seat,
If that be found a forfeited estate.

He owns with toil he wrought the following scenes;
But, if they're naught, ne'er spare him for his pains;
Damn him the more; have no commiseration
For dullness on mature deliberation.
He swears he'll not resent one hissed-off scene,
Nor, like those peevish wits, his play maintain,
Who, to assert their sense, your taste arraign.
Some plot we think he has, and some new thought;
Some humor too, no farce—but that's a fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect;
For so reformed a town who dares correct?
To please, this time, has been his sole pretence,
He'll not instruct, lest it should give offence.
Should he by chance a knave or fool expose,
That hurts none here; sure, here are none of those.

In short, our play shall (with your leave to show it)
Give you one instance of a passive poet,
Who to your judgments yields all resignation;
So save or damn, after your own discretion.

ACT I

SCENE I. *A chocolate-house*

MIRABELL *and* FAINALL *rising from cards.* BETTY *waiting*

MIRABELL. You are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall!

FAINALL. Have we done?

MIRABELL. What you please: I'll play on to entertain you.

FAINALL. No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently. The coldness of a losing gamester lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

MIRABELL. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.

FAINALL. Prithee, why so reserved? Something has put you out of humor.

MIRABELL. Not at all. I happen to be grave to-day, and you are gay; that's all.

FAINALL. Confess, Millamant and you quarrelled last night after I left you; my fair cousin has some humors that would tempt the patience of a Stoic. What, some coxcomb came in, and was well received by her, while you were by?

MIRABELL. Witwoud and Petulant; and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in.

FAINALL. Oh, there it is then! She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason.—What, then my wife was there?

MIRABELL. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more, whom I never saw

[1] hoodwinked.

before. Seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whispered one another, then complained aloud of the vapors, and after fell into a profound silence.

FAINALL. They had a mind to be rid of you.

MIRABELL. For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument I rose, and, with a constrained smile, told her I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome. She reddened, and I withdrew without expecting her reply.

FAINALL. You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

MIRABELL. She is more mistress of herself than to be under the necessity of such a resignation.

FAINALL. What! though half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

MIRABELL. I was then in such a humor, that I should have been better pleased if she had been less discreet.

FAINALL. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal nights. They have 'em three times a-week, and meet by turns at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murdered reputations of the week. You and I are excluded, and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted; but somebody moved that, to avoid scandal, there might be one man of the community, upon which motion Witwoud and Petulant were enrolled members.

MIRABELL. And who may have been the foundress of this sect?—my Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind, and, full of the vigor of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratafia[1]; and let posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

[1] A flavored liqueur.

FAINALL. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation; had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

MIRABELL. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon and compliment her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow, which I carried so far that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a dropsy, persuaded her she was reported to be in labor. The devil's in't, if an old woman is to be flattered further, unless a man should endeavor downright personally to debauch her; and that my virtue forbade me. But for the discovery of this amour I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

FAINALL. What should provoke her to be your enemy unless she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

MIRABELL. She was always civil to me till of late.—I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice, and think that she who does not refuse 'em everything, can refuse 'em nothing.

FAINALL. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and though you may have cruelty enough not to satisfy a lady's longing, you have too much generosity not to be tender of her honor. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

MIRABELL. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you than [is] your wife.

FAINALL. Fie, fie, friend! If you grow censorious I must leave you.—I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

MIRABELL. Who are they?

FAINALL. Petulant and Witwoud.—(*To* BETTY) Bring me some chocolate.

[*Exit* FAINALL]

MIRABELL. Betty, what says your clock?

BETTY. Turned of the last canonical hour,[1] sir. [*Exit* BETTY]

MIRABELL. How pertinently the jade answers me!—(*Looking on his watch*)—Ha! almost one o'clock!—Oh, y'are come!

Enter a Servant

Well, is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

SERVANT. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras[2] that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up, and no hopes appearing of dispatch—besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have failed before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's-place,[3] and there they were riveted in a trice.

MIRABELL. So, so! You are sure they are married?

SERVANT. Married and bedded, sir; I am witness.

MIRABELL. Have you the certificate?

SERVANT. Here it is, sir.

MIRABELL. Has the tailor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

SERVANT. Yes, sir.

MIRABELL. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the consummation till further orders. Bid Waitwell shake his ears, and Dame Partlet[4] rustle up her feathers and meet me at one o'clock by Rosamond's Pond,[5] that I may see her before she returns to her lady; and as you tender your ears be secret. [*Exit* Servant]

[*Enter* FAINALL *and* BETTY]

FAINALL. Joy of your success, Mirabell; you look pleased.

MIRABELL. Aye; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal night. I wonder, Fainall, that you, who are married and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

FAINALL. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

MIRABELL. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal; for a woman who is not a fool, can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.

FAINALL. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwoud entertained by Millamant?

MIRABELL. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

FAINALL. You do her wrong; for, to give her her due, she has wit.

MIRABELL. She has beauty enough to make any man think so, and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

FAINALL. For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

MIRABELL. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults—nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces, sifted her, and separated her failings. I studied 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large that I was not without hopes one day or other to hate her heartily: to which end I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less and less disturbance, till in a few days it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties, and, in all probability, in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

1 Hour set for prayer; also the hours of legal marriage. 2 St. Pancras Church. 3 St. James's Church. 4 The hen in Chaucer's *Nonnes Preestes Tale*. 5 In St. James's Park.

FAINALL. Marry her, marry her! Be half as well acquainted with her charms as you are with her defects, and my life on't, you are your own man again.

MIRABELL. Say you so?

FAINALL. Aye, aye, I have experience: I have a wife, and so forth.

Enter Messenger

MESSENGER. Is one Squire Witwoud here?

BETTY. Yes, what's your business?

MESSENGER. I have a letter for him from his brother Sir Wilfull, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

BETTY. He's in the next room, friend—that way. [*Exit* Messenger]

MIRABELL. What, is the chief of that noble family in town—Sir Wilfull Witwoud?

FAINALL. He is expected to-day. Do you know him?

MIRABELL. I have seen him; he promises to be an extraordinary person. I think you have the honor to be related to him.

FAINALL. Yes; he is half-brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

MIRABELL. I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

FAINALL. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel.

MIRABELL. For travel! Why, the man that I mean is above forty.

FAINALL. No matter for that; 'tis for the honor of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

MIRABELL. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

FAINALL. By no means; 'tis better as 'tis. 'Tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstocked.

MIRABELL. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant and those of the squire his brother anything related?

FAINALL. Not at all; Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

MIRABELL. So one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

FAINALL. Sir Wilfull is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy.—But when he's drunk he's as loving as the monster in *The Tempest*, and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good nature, and does not always want wit.

MIRABELL. Not always; but as often as his memory fails him, and his commonplace[1] of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory and some few scraps of other folks' wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approved; yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality—he is not exceptious; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest, and call downright rudeness and ill language satire and fire.

FAINALL. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length.—Behold the original!

Enter WITWOUD

WITWOUD. Afford me your compassion, my dears! Pity me, Fainall! Mirabell, pity me!

MIRABELL. I do, from my soul.

FAINALL. Why, what's the matter?

WITWOUD. —No letters for me, Betty?

BETTY. Did not a messenger bring you one but now, sir?

WITWOUD. Aye, but no other?

BETTY. No, sir.

WITWOUD. That's hard, that's very hard. —A messenger!—A mule, a beast of burden! He has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author as an epistle dedicatory.

1 collection.

MIRABELL. A fool,—and your brother, Witwoud?

WITWOUD. Aye, aye, my half-brother. My half-brother he is; no nearer, upon honor.

MIRABELL. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool.

WITWOUD. Good, good, Mirabell, *le drôle!* Good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him.—Fainall, how does your lady? Gad, I say anything in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say. But she's the best woman in the world.

FAINALL. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

WITWOUD. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall.—Your judgment, Mirabell.

MIRABELL. You had better step and ask his wife if you would be credibly informed.

WITWOUD. Mirabell?

MIRABELL. Aye.

WITWOUD. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons—gad, I have forgot what I was going to say to you!

MIRABELL. I thank you heartily, heartily.

WITWOUD. No! But prithee, excuse me; —my memory is such a memory.

MIRABELL. Have a care of such apologies, Witwoud; for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain either of the spleen or his memory.

FAINALL. What have you done with Petulant?

WITWOUD. He's reckoning his money—my money it was. I have no luck to-day.

FAINALL. You may allow him to win of you at play, for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee. Since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his, of course.

MIRABELL. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

WITWOUD Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates.—Petulant's my friend, and a very honest fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a smattering—faith and troth, a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit. Nay, I'll do him justice. I'm his friend; I won't wrong him neither.—And if he had any judgment in the world, he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

FAINALL. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred?

WITWOUD. No, no, hang him! The rogue has no manners at all, that I must own—no more breeding than a bumbaily,[1] that I grant you—'tis pity, faith; the fellow has fire and life.

MIRABELL. What, courage?

WITWOUD. Hum, faith I don't know as to that; I can't say as to that. Yes, faith, in a controversy, he'll contradict anybody.

MIRABELL. —Though 'twere a man whom he feared, or a woman whom he loved?

WITWOUD. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks—we have all our failings: you're too hard upon him—you are, faith. Let me excuse him. I can defend most of his faults, except one or two. One he has, that's the truth on't; if he were my brother, I could not acquit him—that, indeed, I could wish were otherwise.

MIRABELL. Aye, marry, what's that, Witwoud?

WITWOUD. O pardon me!—Expose the infirmities of my friend?—No, my dear, excuse me there.

FAINALL. What! I warrant he's unsincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

WITWOUD. No, no!—What if he be? 'Tis no matter for that; his wit will excuse that. A wit should no more be sincere than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

MIRABELL. Maybe you think him too positive?

WITWOUD. No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

1 Contemptuous slang for "bailiff."

FAINALL. Too illiterate?

WITWOUD. That! that's his happiness: his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to show his natural parts.

MIRABELL. He wants words?

WITWOUD. Aye: but I like him for that, now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning.

FAINALL. He's impudent?

WITWOUD. No, that's not it.

MIRABELL. Vain?

WITWOUD. No.

MIRABELL. What! He speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion?

WITWOUD. Truths! ha! ha! ha! No, no; since you will have it—I mean, he never speaks truth at all—that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now, that is a fault.

Enter Coachman

COACHMAN. Is Master Petulant here, mistress?

BETTY. Yes.

COACHMAN. Three gentlewomen in a coach would speak with him.

FAINALL. O brave Petulant!—three!

BETTY. I'll tell him.

COACHMAN. You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon-water.

[*Exeunt* BETTY *and* Coachman]

WITWOUD. That should be for two fasting strumpets, and a bawd troubled with the wind. Now you may know what the three are.

MIRABELL. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

WITWOUD. Aye, aye; friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting. But to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach-hire, and something more, by the week, to call on him once a day at public places.

MIRABELL. How!

WITWOUD. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him.—Why, this is nothing to what he used to do; before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself.

FAINALL. —Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

WITWOUD. Mean! Why, he would slip you out of this chocolate-house just when you had been talking to him; as soon as your back was turned—whip, he was gone!—then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf and a mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice, where he would send in for himself. That I mean—call for himself, wait for himself; nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

MIRABELL. I confess this is something extraordinary.—I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a-coming.—Oh! I ask his pardon.

Enter PETULANT [*and* BETTY]

BETTY. Sir, the coach stays.

PETULANT. Well, well; I come.—'Sbud, a man had as good be a professed midwife as a professed whoremaster, at this rate! To be knocked up and raised at all hours, and in all places! Pox on 'em, I won't come!—D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come—let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out.

FAINALL. You are very cruel, Petulant.

PETULANT. All's one, let it pass. I have a humor to be cruel.

MIRABELL. I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate.

PETULANT. Condition! condition's a dried fig if I am not in humor!—By this hand, if they were your—a—a—your what-d'ye-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off if I want appetite.

MIRABELL. What-d'ye-call-'ems! What are they, Witwoud?

WITWOUD. Empresses, my dear: by your what-d'ye-call-'ems he means sultana queens.

PETULANT. Aye, Roxolanas.

MIRABELL. Cry you mercy!

FAINALL. Witwoud says they are—

PETULANT. What does he say th' are?

WITWOUD. I? Fine ladies, I say.

PETULANT. Pass on, Witwoud.—Hark'ee, by this light, his relations—two coheiresses,

his cousins, and an old aunt who loves caterwauling better than a conventicle.

WITWOUD. Ha! ha! ha! I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off.—Ha! ha! ha! Gad, I can't be angry with him if he had said they were my mother and my sisters.

MIRABELL. No?

WITWOUD. No; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me. Dear Petulant!

BETTY. They are gone, sir, in great anger.

PETULANT. Enough; let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexion—saves paint.

FAINALL. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.

MIRABELL. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions there yet? I shall cut your throat some time or other, Petulant, about that business.

PETULANT. Aye, aye, let that pass—there are other throats to be cut.

MIRABELL. Meaning mine, sir?

PETULANT. Not I—I mean nobody—I know nothing: but there are uncles and nephews in the world—and they may be rivals.—What then? All's one for that.

MIRABELL. How! Hark'ee, Petulant; come hither—explain, or I shall call your interpreter.

PETULANT. Explain? I know nothing. Why, you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wishfort's?

MIRABELL. True.

PETULANT. Why, that's enough—you and he are not friends; and if he should marry and have a child you may be disinherited, ha?

MIRABELL. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

PETULANT. All's one for that; why, then, say I know something.

MIRABELL. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress; thou sha't, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle?

PETULANT. I? Nothing, I. If throats are to be cut, let swords clash! snug's the word; I shrug and am silent.

MIRABELL. Oh, raillery, raillery! Come, I know thou art in the women's secrets.—What, you're a cabalist; I know you stayed at Millamant's last night after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me? Tell me. If thou hadst but good nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, would show as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he would no more be seen by thee than Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wo't tell me.

PETULANT. If I do, will you grant me common sense then for the future?

MIRABELL. Faith, I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heaven may grant it thee in the meantime.

PETULANT. Well, hark'ee.

(MIRABELL *and* PETULANT *talk apart*)

FAINALL. [*To* WITWOUD] Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as a lover.

WITWOUD. Pshaw! pshaw! that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part, but that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—hark'ee—to tell you a secret, but let it go no further—between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

FAINALL. How!

WITWOUD. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

FAINALL. I thought you had died for her.

WITWOUD. Umh—no—

FAINALL. She has wit.

WITWOUD. 'Tis what she will hardly allow anybody else: now, demme! I should hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks for.

FAINALL. Why do you think so?

WITWOUD. We stayed pretty late there last night, and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town—and is between him and the best part of his estate. Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my Lady Wishfort has been told; and

you know she hates Mirabell worse than a Quaker hates a parrot, or than a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I cannot say, but there were items of such a treaty being in embryo; and if it should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort unfortunately fobbed, i'faith.

FAINALL. 'Tis impossible Millamant should hearken to it.

WITWOUD. Faith, my dear, I can't tell; she's a woman, and a kind of humorist.[1]

MIRABELL. [*To* PETULANT] And this is the sum of what you could collect last night?

PETULANT. The quintessence. Maybe Witwoud knows more; he stayed longer. Besides, they never mind him; they say anything before him.

MIRABELL. I thought you had been the greatest favorite.

PETULANT. Aye, *tête-à-tête*,[2] but not in public, because I make remarks.

MIRABELL. Do you?

PETULANT. Aye, aye; pox, I'm malicious, man! Now, he's soft, you know; they are not in awe of him—the fellow's well-bred; he's what you call a what-d'ye-call-'em, a fine gentleman—but he's silly withal.

MIRABELL. I thank you. I know as much as my curiosity requires.—Fainall, are you for the Mall?

FAINALL. Aye, I'll take a turn before dinner.

WITWOUD. Aye, we'll all walk in the Park; the ladies talked of being there.

MIRABELL. I thought you were obliged to watch for your brother Sir Wilfull's arrival.

WITWOUD. No, no; he comes to his aunt's, my Lady Wishfort. Pox on him! I shall be troubled with him, too; what shall I do with the fool?

PETULANT. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards, and so have but one trouble with you both.

WITWOUD. Oh, rare Petulant! Thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning. Thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

PETULANT. Enough! I'm in a humor to be severe.

MIRABELL. Are you? Pray then, walk by yourselves: let not us be accessory to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

PETULANT. What, what! Then let 'em either show their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else show their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

MIRABELL. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou oughtest to be most ashamed thyself when thou hast put another out of countenance?

PETULANT. Not I, by this hand!—I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt or ill breeding.

MIRABELL. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.

Exeunt

ACT II

SCENE I. *St. James's Park*

Enter MRS. FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD

MRS. FAINALL. Aye, aye, dear Marwood; if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves and among ourselves. Men are ever in extremes—either doting or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable; and when they cease to love—(we ought to think at least) they loathe; they look upon us with horror and distaste; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as such, fly from us.

MRS. MARWOOD. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us and that the man so often should

1 An unreliable person.
2 Q1 *teste-a-teste*.

outlive the lover. But say what you will, 'tis better to be left than never to have been loved. To pass our youth in dull indifference, to refuse the sweets of life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

MRS. FAINALL. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind only in compliance to my mother's humor?

MRS. MARWOOD. Certainly. To be free; I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses with which our sex of force must entertain themselves apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to dote like lovers; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts and every heart, or soon or late, receive and readmit him as its lawful tyrant.

MRS. FAINALL. Bless me, how have I been deceived! Why, you profess a libertine.

MRS. MARWOOD. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere; acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

MRS. FAINALL. Never!

MRS. MARWOOD. You hate mankind?

MRS. FAINALL. Heartily, inveterately.

MRS. MARWOOD. Your husband?

MRS. FAINALL. Most transcendently; aye, though I say it, meritoriously.

MRS. MARWOOD. Give me your hand upon it.

MRS. FAINALL. There.

MRS. MARWOOD. I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

MRS. FAINALL. —Is it possible? Dost thou hate those vipers, men?

MRS. MARWOOD. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

MRS. FAINALL. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea!

MRS. MARWOOD. And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion further.

MRS. FAINALL. How?

MRS. MARWOOD. Faith, by marrying; if I could but find one that loved me very well and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

MRS. FAINALL. You would not make him a cuckold!

MRS. MARWOOD. No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

MRS. FAINALL. Why had not you as good do it?

MRS. MARWOOD. Oh, if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst and be out of his pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

MRS. FAINALL. Ingenious mischief! would thou wert married to Mirabell.

MRS. MARWOOD. Would I were!

MRS. FAINALL. You change color.

MRS. MARWOOD. Because I hate him.

MRS. FAINALL. So do I, but I can hear him named. But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

MRS. MARWOOD. I never loved him; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.

MRS. FAINALL. By the reason you give for your aversion, one would think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies must acquit him.

MRS. MARWOOD. Oh, then it seems you are one of his favorable enemies! Methinks you look a little pale—and now you flush again.

MRS. FAINALL. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden.

MRS. MARWOOD. What ails you?

MRS. FAINALL. —My husband. Don't you see him? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

Enter FAINALL *and* MIRABELL

MRS. MARWOOD. Ha! ha! ha! He comes opportunely for you.

MRS. FAINALL. For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

FAINALL. [*To* MRS. FAINALL] My dear!

MRS. FAINALL. My soul!

FAINALL. You don't look well to-day, child.

MRS. FAINALL. [*To* MIRABELL] D'ye think so?

MIRABELL. He is the only man that does, madam.

MRS. FAINALL. The only man that would tell me so, at least, and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.

FAINALL. Oh, my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness; I know you cannot resent anything from me, especially what is an effect of my concern.

MRS. FAINALL. Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night; I would fain hear it out.

MIRABELL. The persons concerned in that affair have yet a tolerable reputation.—I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious.

MRS. FAINALL. He has a humor more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

Exeunt MRS. FAINALL *and* MIRABELL

FAINALL. Excellent creature! Well, sure if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable man.

MRS. MARWOOD. Aye?

FAINALL. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes but to sit down and weep like Alexander when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

MRS. MARWOOD. Will you not follow 'em?

FAINALL. Faith, I think not.

MRS. MARWOOD. Pray, let us; I have a reason.

FAINALL. You are not jealous?

MRS. MARWOOD. Of whom?

FAINALL. Of Mirabell.

MRS. MARWOOD. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you that I am tender of your honor?

FAINALL. You would intimate, then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my wife and him.

MRS. MARWOOD. I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

FAINALL. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

MRS. MARWOOD. It may be you are deceived.

FAINALL. It may be so. I do now begin to apprehend it.

MRS. MARWOOD. What?

FAINALL. That I have been deceived, madam, and you are false.

MRS. MARWOOD. That I am false! What mean you?

FAINALL. To let you know I see through all your little arts.—Come, you both love him, and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another have made you clash till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession reddening on your cheeks and sparkling from your eyes.

MRS. MARWOOD. You do me wrong.

FAINALL. I do not. 'Twas for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife, that by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

MRS. MARWOOD. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

FAINALL. With infidelity, with loving another—with love of Mirabell.

MRS. MARWOOD. 'Tis false! I challenge you to show an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him!

FAINALL. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance?—the injuries you have done him are a proof—your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion?—to undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant?

MRS. MARWOOD. My obligations to my lady urged me. I had professed a friendship

to her, and could not see her easy nature so abused by that dissembler.

FAINALL. What, was it conscience, then? Professed a friendship! Oh, the pious friendships of the female sex!

MRS. MARWOOD. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us or mutual faith to one another.

FAINALL. Ha! ha! ha! You are my wife's friend, too.

MRS. MARWOOD. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me?—You, you upbraid me? Have I been false to her, through strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate? And have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? To you it should be meritorious that I have been vicious: and do you reflect that guilt upon me which should lie buried in your bosom?

FAINALL. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties when set in competition with your love to me.

MRS. MARWOOD. 'Tis false; you urged it with deliberate malice! 'Twas spoken in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

FAINALL. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousy; but you are stung to find you are discovered.

MRS. MARWOOD. It shall be all discovered. —You too shall be discovered; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed.—If I do it myself I shall prevent your baseness.

FAINALL. Why, what will you do?

MRS. MARWOOD. Disclose it to your wife; own what has passed between us.

FAINALL. Frenzy!

MRS. MARWOOD. By all my wrongs I'll do't!—I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune! With both I trusted you,—you bankrupt in honor, as indigent of wealth.

FAINALL. Your fame I have preserved: your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it—'tis true. Had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stolen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconcilement; Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune, which then would have descended to my wife—and wherefore did I marry but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you?

MRS. MARWOOD. Deceit and frivolous pretence!

FAINALL. —Death, am I not married? What's pretence? Am I not imprisoned, fettered? Have I not a wife?—nay, a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle through the ways of wedlock and this world! Will you yet be reconciled to truth and me?

MRS. MARWOOD. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent: I hate you, and shall forever.

FAINALL. For loving you?

MRS. MARWOOD. I loathe the name of love after such usage; and next to the guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewell!

FAINALL. Nay, we must not part thus.

MRS. MARWOOD. Let me go.

FAINALL. Come, I'm sorry.

MRS. MARWOOD. I care not—let me go —break my hands, do! I'd leave 'em to get loose.

FAINALL. I would not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here?

MRS. MARWOOD. Well, I have deserved it all.

FAINALL. You know I love you.

MRS. MARWOOD. Poor dissembling!—Oh, that—well, it is not yet—

FAINALL. What? What is it not? What is it not yet? It is not yet too late—

MRS. MARWOOD. No, it is not yet too late—I have that comfort.

FAINALL. It is, to love another.

MRS. MARWOOD. But not to loathe, detest, abhor mankind, myself, and the whole treacherous world.

FAINALL. Nay, this is extravagance!—Come, I ask your pardon—no tears—I was to blame; I could not love you and be easy in my doubts. Pray, forbear—I believe you; I'm convinced I've done you wrong, and anyway, every way will make amends. I'll hate my wife yet more, damn her! I'll part with her, rob her of all she 's worth, and we'll retire somewhere—anywhere—to another world. I'll marry thee—be pacified. —'Sdeath, they come! Hide your face, your tears.—You have a mask; wear it a moment. This way, this way—be persuaded. *Exeunt*

Enter MIRABELL *and* MRS. FAINALL

MRS. FAINALL. They are here yet.

MIRABELL. They are turning into the other walk.

MRS. FAINALL. While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him; but since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

MIRABELL. Oh, you should hate with prudence.

MRS. FAINALL. Yes, for I have loved with indiscretion.

MIRABELL. You should have just so much disgust for your husband as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

MRS. FAINALL. You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds, and would you set limits to that aversion of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this man?

MIRABELL. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol, reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover, yet one whose wit and outward fair behavior have gained a reputation with the town enough to make that woman stand excused who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion, a worse had not answered to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

MRS. FAINALL. I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

MIRABELL. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

MRS. FAINALL. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

MIRABELL. Waitwell, my servant.

MRS. FAINALL. He is an humble servant to Foible my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

MIRABELL. Care is taken for that—she is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

MRS. FAINALL. Who?

MIRABELL. Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt any servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in *The Fox*, stand upon terms; so I made him sure beforehand.

MRS. FAINALL. So if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes, and release her by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage?

MIRABELL. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

MRS. FAINALL. She talked last night of endeavoring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

MIRABELL. That was by Foible's direction and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

MRS. FAINALL. Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my lady will do anything to get a husband, and when she has this which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to anything to get rid of him.

MIRABELL. Yes, I think the good lady would marry anything that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

MRS. FAINALL. Female frailty! We must all come to it if we live to be old and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decayed.

MIRABELL. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'tis the green sickness of a second childhood, and, like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall and withers in an affected bloom.

MRS. FAINALL. Here's your mistress.

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT, WITWOUD, *and* MINCING

MIRABELL. Here she comes, i'faith, full sail, with her fan spread and her streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders. Ha, no, I cry her mercy!

MRS. FAINALL. I see but one poor empty sculler, and he tows her woman after him.

MIRABELL. (*To* MRS. MILLAMANT) You seem to be unattended, madam. You used to have the *beau monde*[1] throng after you, and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

WITWOUD. Like moths about a candle.—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, I have denied myself airs to-day. I have walked as fast through the crowd—

WITWOUD. As a favorite just disgraced, and with as few followers.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Dear Mr. Witwoud, truce with your similitudes; for I'm as sick of 'em—

WITWOUD. As a physician of a good air.—I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Yet again! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

WITWOUD. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a screen before a grate fire.—I confess I do blaze to-day; I am too bright.

MRS. FAINALL. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haste? I have asked every living thing I met for you; I have inquired after you as after a new fashion.

WITWOUD. Madam, truce with your similitudes.—No, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

MRS. MILLAMANT. By your leave, Witwoud, that were like inquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

WITWOUD. Hum, a hit! a hit! a palpable hit! I confess it.

MRS. FAINALL. You were dressed before I came abroad.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Aye, that's true.—Oh, but then I had—Mincing, what had I? Why was I so long?

MINCING. O mem, your la'ship stayed to peruse a pecquet of letters.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, aye, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters.—Nobody knows how to write letters—and yet one has 'em, one does not know why. They serve one to pin up one's hair.

WITWOUD. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwoud; I never pin up my hair with prose. I fancy one's hair would not curl if it were pinned up with prose. I think I tried once, Mincing.

MINCING. O mem, I shall never forget it.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Aye, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

MINCING. Till I had the cremp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem; and all to no purpose. But when your la'ship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as anything, and is so pure and so crips.

WITWOUD. Indeed, so "crips"?

MINCING. You're such a critic, Mr. Witwoud.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night? Oh, aye, and went away.—Now I think on't I'm angry—no,

[1] the world of fashion.

now I think on't I'm pleased—for I believe I gave you some pain.

MIRABELL. Does that please you?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

MIRABELL. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, I ask you pardon for that—one's cruelty is one's power; and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

MIRABELL. Aye, aye, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant, for beauty is the lover's gift. 'Tis he bestows your charms—your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flattered by it and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, the vanity of these men!—Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift!—Lord, what is a lover, that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases: and then, if one pleases, one makes more.

WITWOUD. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

MRS. MILLAMANT. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo. They can but reflect what we look and say—vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

MIRABELL. Yet to those two vain empty things you owe the two greatest pleasures of your life.

MRS. MILLAMANT. How so?

MIRABELL. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised, and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

WITWOUD. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait till she dies before it can catch her last words.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, fiction!—Fainall, let us leave these men.

MIRABELL. (*Aside to* MRS. FAINALL) Draw off Witwoud.

MRS. FAINALL. Immediately.—[*Aloud*] I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud.

Exeunt MRS. FAINALL *and* WITWOUD

MIRABELL. [*To* MRS. MILLAMANT] I would beg a little private audience too.—You had the tyranny to deny me last night, though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

MRS. MILLAMANT. You saw I was engaged.

MIRABELL. Unkind! You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools—things who visit you from their excessive idleness, bestowing on your easiness that time which is the encumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they should admire you; they are not capable—or if they were, it should be to you as a mortification, for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

MRS. MILLAMANT. I please myself: besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

MIRABELL. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Yes, the vapors; fools are physic for it, next to asafœtida.

MIRABELL. You are not in a course of fools?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me.—I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you; we shan't agree.

MIRABELL. Not in our physic, it may be.

MRS. MILLAMANT. And yet our distemper, in all likelihood, will be the same; for

we shall be sick of one another. I shan't endure to be reprimanded nor instructed: 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell,—I'm resolved—I think—you may go.—Ha! ha! ha! What would you give, that you could help loving me? 598

MIRABELL. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Come, don't look grave, then. Well, what do you say to me?

MIRABELL. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman by plain dealing and sincerity. 606

MRS. MILLAMANT. Sententious Mirabell! —Prithee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.[1] 611

MIRABELL. You are merry, madam, but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

MRS. MILLAMANT. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a lovesick face. Ha! ha! ha!—Well, I won't laugh; don't be peevish—Heigho! now I'll be melancholy—as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me, woo me now.—Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well; I see they are walking away.

MIRABELL. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment—

MRS. MILLAMANT. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed? No. 629

MIRABELL. But how came you to know it?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Unless by the help of the devil, you can't imagine—unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me. 637

[*Exit* MRS. MILLAMANT]

MIRABELL. [*Calling*] I have something more!—Gone!—Think of you? To think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation—a very tranquillity of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turned —and by one as well as another. For motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.—Oh, here come my pair of turtles!—What, billing so sweetly! Is not Valentine's Day over with you yet?

Enter WAITWELL *and* FOIBLE

Sirrah Waitwell; why, sure you think you were married for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency. 658

WAITWELL. Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have indeed been solacing in lawful delights; but still with an eye to business, sir. I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way. 665

MIRABELL. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

FOIBLE. Oh, 'las, sir, I'm so ashamed!—I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could. 670

WAITWELL. That she did indeed, sir. It was my fault that she did not make more.

MIRABELL. That I believe.

FOIBLE. But I told my lady as you instructed me, sir, that I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland, your uncle; and that I would put her ladyship's picture in my pocket to show him—which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamored of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyship's feet and worship the original. 682

MIRABELL. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

[1] Used as wall coverings.

WAITWELL. I think she has profited, sir; I think so.

FOIBLE. You have seen Madam Millamant, sir?

MIRABELL. Yes.

FOIBLE. I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity; she had so much company last night.

MIRABELL. Your diligence will merit more —in the meantime— (*Gives her money*)

FOIBLE. O dear sir, your humble servant!

WAITWELL. [*Putting forth his hand*] Spouse.

MIRABELL. Stand off, sir, not a penny!—Go on and prosper, Foible—the lease shall be made good and the farm stocked if we succeed.

FOIBLE. I don't question your generosity, sir, and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress till I come.—Oh, dear, [*Looking out*] I'm sure that was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a mask! If she has seen me with you, I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, sir.—B'w'y,[1] Waitwell. [*Exit* FOIBLE]

WAITWELL. Sir Rowland, if you please.—The jade's so pert upon her preferment she forgets herself.

MIRABELL. Come, sir, will you endeavor to forget yourself, and transform into Sir Rowland?

WAITWELL. Why, sir, it will be impossible I should remember myself.—Married, knighted, and attended all in one day! 'tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self, and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither; for now, I remember me, I'm married and can't be my own man again.

Aye, there's the grief; that's the sad change of life,
To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

Exeunt

1 God be with you.

ACT III

SCENE I. *A room in* LADY WISHFORT'S *house*

LADY WISHFORT *at her toilet*, PEG *waiting*

LADY WISHFORT. Merciful! no news of Foible yet?

PEG. No, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. I have no more patience.—If I have not fretted myself till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me! Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear, sweetheart?—An arrant ash-color, as I am a person! Look you how this wench stirs!—Why dost thou not fetch me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, Mopus[2]?

PEG. The red ratafia, does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

LADY WISHFORT. Ratafia, fool! No, fool.—Not the ratafia, fool—grant me patience!—I mean the Spanish paper,[3] idiot—complexion, darling. Paint, paint, paint!—dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? Why dost thou not stir, puppet? Thou wooden thing upon wires!

PEG. Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient!—I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has locked it up and carried the key with her.

LADY WISHFORT. A pox take you both!—Fetch me the cherry-brandy then.

Exit PEG

I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. Qualmsick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding.—Wench! Come, come, wench, what art thou doing? Sipping, tasting?—Save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

[*Re-*]*enter* PEG *with a bottle and china cup*

PEG. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

LADY WISHFORT. A cup, save thee! and what a cup hast thou brought!—Dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? Why didst thou not bring thy thim-

2 Any dull person.
3 For the complexion.

ble? Hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg[1]?—I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill!—So—again.—(*Knocking at the door*)—See who that is.—Set down the bottle first—here, here, under the table.—What, wouldst thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? As I'm a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road before she came to me, like Maritornes[2] the Asturian in *Don Quixote*!—No Foible yet? 48

PEG. No, madam; Mrs. Marwood.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, Marwood; let her come in.—Come in, good Marwood.

Enter MRS. MARWOOD

MRS. MARWOOD. I'm surprised to find your ladyship in dishabille at this time of day. 54

LADY WISHFORT. Foible's a lost thing—has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

MRS. MARWOOD. I saw her but now as I came masked through the park, in conference with Mirabell. 60

LADY WISHFORT. With Mirabell!—You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence! I sent her to negotiate an affair in which, if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruined. Oh, my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected. 69

MRS. MARWOOD. O madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. Foible's integrity!

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt integrity itself! If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah, dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity?—Hark! I hear her! [*To* PEG] Go, you thing, and send her in. [*Exit* PEG] [*To* MRS. MARWOOD] Dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom.—You'll pardon me, dear friend; I can make bold with you.—There are books over the chimney—Quarles and Prynne, and *The Short View of the Stage*, with Bunyan's works, to entertain you. 85

Exit MRS. MARWOOD

Enter FOIBLE

LADY WISHFORT. O Foible, where hast thou been? What hast thou been doing?

FOIBLE. Madam, I have seen the party.

LADY WISHFORT. But what hast thou done? 90

FOIBLE. Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, and are to do; I have only promised. But a man so enamored—so transported!—Well, here it is, all that is left—all that is not kissed away.—Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland, I say— 97

LADY WISHFORT. The miniature has been counted like—but hast thou not betrayed me, Foible? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell?—What hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me; has he got nothing out of thee? 103

FOIBLE. (*Aside*) So the devil has been beforehand with me. What shall I say?—(*Aloud*)—Alas, madam, could I help it if I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he used me, and all upon your ladyship's account, I'm sure you would not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst, I could have borne; but he had a fling at your ladyship too. And then I could not hold, but i'faith I gave him his own. 114

LADY WISHFORT. Me? What did the filthy fellow say?

FOIBLE. Oh, madam! 'tis a shame to say what he said—with his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his nose. Humph! (says he) what, you are a hatching some plot (says he), you are so early abroad, or catering (says he), ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant.—Half-pay is but thin subsistence (says he)—well, what pension does your lady propose? Let me see (says he); what, she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated (says he) and— 127

1 Eaten then as a confection is today.
2 Persistently courted by Don Quixote.

LADY WISHFORT. Odds my life, I'll have him—I'll have him murdered! I'll have him poisoned! Where does he eat?—I'll marry a drawer to have him poisoned in his wine. I'll send for Robin from Locket's[1] immediately.

FOIBLE. Poison him! poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, madam, starve him: marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. Oh, you would bless yourself to hear what he said!

LADY WISHFORT. A villain! Superannuated!

FOIBLE. Humph (says he), I hear you are laying designs against me too (says he), and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle (he does not suspect a word of your ladyship); but (says he) I'll fit you for that. I warrant you (says he) I'll hamper you for that (says he)—you and your old frippery too (says he); I'll handle you—

LADY WISHFORT. Audacious villain! Handle me! would he durst!—Frippery! old frippery! Was there ever such a foul-mouthed fellow? I'll be married to-morrow; I'll be contracted to-night.

FOIBLE. The sooner the better, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. Will Sir Rowland be here, sayest thou? When, Foible?

FOIBLE. Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband after knighthood with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladyship's hand after dinner.

LADY WISHFORT. Frippery! superannuated frippery! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags! a tatterdemalion! I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-lane penthouse or a gibbet thief. A slander-mouthed railer! I warrant the spendthrift prodigal's in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birthday.[2] I'll spoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he shall have my niece with her fortune, he shall.

FOIBLE. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first, and angle into Blackfriars for brass farthings with an old mitten.[3]

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any economy[4] of face. This wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

FOIBLE. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly; indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white varnish.

LADY WISHFORT. Let me see the glass.—Cracks, sayest thou?—why, I am arrantly flayed—I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

FOIBLE. I warrant you, madam, a little art once made your picture like you, and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? Or will he not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, Foible, and push? For if he should not be importunate, I shall never break decorums—I shall die with confusion if I am forced to advance.—Oh, no, I can never advance!—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy, neither.—I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

FOIBLE. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

LADY WISHFORT. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—a sort of dyingness—you see that picture has a sort of a—ha, Foible? a swimmingness in the eye—yes, I'll look so.—My niece affects it, but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here.—Is he handsome?

1 A tavern near Charing Cross.
2 From buying the customary gifts.
3 From the debtor's prison.
4 good order.

Don't answer me. I won't know; I'll be surprised. I'll be taken by surprise.

FOIBLE. By storm, madam! Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

LADY WISHFORT. Is he? Oh, then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. Nothing but importunity can surmount decorums. Oh, I'm glad he's a brisk man!—Let my things be removed, good Foible.

[*Exit* LADY WISHFORT]

Enter MRS. FAINALL

MRS. FAINALL. Oh, Foible, I have been in a fright lest I should come too late! That devil Marwood saw you in the Park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

FOIBLE. Discover what, madam?

MRS. FAINALL. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face! I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

FOIBLE. Oh, dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladyship that was deficient, but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladyship and Mr. Mirabell might have hindered his communicating this secret.

MRS. FAINALL. Dear Foible, forget that.

FOIBLE. O dear madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet, winning gentleman—but your ladyship is the pattern of generosity.—Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr. Mirabell cannot choose but be grateful. I find your ladyship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladyship our success: Mrs. Marwood had told my lady, but I warrant I managed myself. I turned it all for the better. I told my lady that Mr. Mirabell railed at her; I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my lady is so incensed that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says. I warrant I worked her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a Welsh maidenhead.

MRS. FAINALL. O rare Foible!

FOIBLE. Madam, I beg your ladyship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him: besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me.—She has a month's mind;[1] but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her.—[*Calls*] John!—remove my lady's toilet.—Madam, your servant: my lady is so impatient I fear she'll come for me if I stay.

MRS. FAINALL. I'll go with you up the backstairs lest I should meet her. *Exeunt*

[*Re-*]*enter* MRS. MARWOOD [*from the closet*]

MRS. MARWOOD. Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance?—Yes, I shall watch you. Why this wench is the *passe-partout*—a very master-key to everybody's strong-box. My friend Fainall, have you carried it so swimmingly? I thought there was something in it, but it seems 'tis over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite, then, but from a surfeit.—Else you could never be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant, to procure for him! A pattern of generosity, that, I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your match.—O man, man! Woman, woman! The devil's an ass: if I were a painter, I would draw him like an idiot, a driveller with a bib and bells. Man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend!—"Madam Marwood has a month's mind, but he can't abide her."—'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair, without you could have kept his counsel closer. I shall not prove another pattern of generosity, and stalk for him till he take his stand to aim at a fortune; he has not obliged me to that with those excesses of himself! And now I'll have none of him.—Here comes the good lady, panting ripe, with a heart full of hope, and

[1] an inclination.

a head full of care, like any chemist[1] upon the day of projection.[2]

Enter LADY WISHFORT

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, dear Marwood, what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness?—but my dear friend is all goodness.

MRS. MARWOOD. No apologies, dear madam; I have been very well entertained.

LADY WISHFORT. As I'm a person, I am in a very chaos to think I should so forget myself: but I have such an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do.—[*Calls*] Foible!—I expect my nephew, Sir Wilfull, every moment too.—[*Calls again*] Why, Foible!—He means to travel for improvement.

MRS. MARWOOD. Methinks Sir Wilfull should rather think of marrying than travelling, at his years. I hear he is turned of forty.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels—I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back and has acquired discretion to choose for himself.

MRS. MARWOOD. Methinks Mrs. Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards.—'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

LADY WISHFORT. I promise you I have thought on't—and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you I will. I value your judgment extremely. On my word, I'll propose it.

Enter FOIBLE

LADY WISHFORT. Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner. I must make haste.

FOIBLE. Mr. Witwoud and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladyship.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, dear, I can't appear till I'm dressed!—Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me.

[*Exeunt* LADY WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE]

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT *and* MINCING

MRS. MILLAMANT. Sure never anything was so unbred as that odious man!—Marwood, your servant.

MRS. MARWOOD. You have a color; what's the matter?

MRS. MILLAMANT. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provoked me into a flame: I have broken my fan.—Mincing, lend me yours. Is not all the powder out of my hair?

MRS. MARWOOD. No. What has he done?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talked—nay, he has said nothing neither, but he has contradicted everything that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he would have quarrelled.

MINCING. I vow, mem, I thought once they would have fit.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of choosing one's acquaintance as one does one's clothes.

MRS. MARWOOD. If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, though never so good, as we are of one suit though never so fine. A fool and a doily stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

MRS. MILLAMANT. I could consent to wear 'em if they would wear alike; but fools never wear out—they are such *drap de Berri*[3] things without one could give 'em to one's chambermaid after a day or two!

MRS. MARWOOD. 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the playhouse? A fine, gay, glossy fool should be given there, like a new masking habit, after the masquerade is over and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise, and never admitted by a woman of wit but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would but appear barefaced now, and own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwoud as your hood and scarf. And indeed, 'tis time, for the town

1 alchemist. 2 experiment. 3 A woolen cloth from Berry, France.

has found it; the secret is grown too big for the pretence. 'Tis like Mrs. Primly's great belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips. Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it than my Lady Strammel can her face—that goodly face, which, in defiance of her Rhenish wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

MRS. MILLAMANT. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decayed beauty or a discarded toast.—Mincing, tell the men they may come up.—My aunt is not dressing; their folly is less provoking than your malice.

Exit MINCING

—The town has found it! what has it found? That Mirabell loves me is no more a secret than it is a secret that you discovered it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

MRS. MARWOOD. You are nettled.

MRS. MILLAMANT. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

MRS. MARWOOD. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, silly! ha! ha! ha! I could laugh immoderately.—Poor Mirabell! His constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside. I swear, I never enjoined it him to be so coy. If I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to show more gallantry—'tis hardly well-bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha! ha! ha! Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh—ha! ha! ha!—though I grant you 'tis a little barbarous—ha! ha! ha!

MRS. MARWOOD. What pity 'tis, so much fine raillery and delivered with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ha! Dear creature, I ask your pardon. I swear, I did not mind you.

MRS. MARWOOD. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you—

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh dear, what? for it is the same thing if I hear it—ha! ha! ha!

MRS. MARWOOD. That I detest him, hate him, madam.

MRS. MILLAMANT. O madam! why, so do I—and yet the creature loves me—ha! ha! ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it.—I am a sibyl if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death,[1] I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young; if you could but stay for me, I should overtake you—but that cannot be.—Well, that thought makes me melancholy.—Now I'll be sad.

MRS. MARWOOD. Your merry note may be changed sooner than you think.

MRS. MILLAMANT. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolved I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

[*Re-*]*enter* MINCING

MINCING. The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam, and will wait on you.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Desire Mrs.——that is in the next room to sing the song I would have learned yesterday.—You shall hear it, madam—not that there's any great matter in it, but 'tis agreeable to my humor.

SONG

(Set by Mr. Eccles and sung by Mrs. Hodgson)

1

Love's but the frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition joined;
A sickly flame, which, if not fed, expires,
And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires.

2

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
Or amorous youth, that gives the joy;
But 'tis the glory to have pierced a swain,
For whom inferior beauties sighed in vain.

3

Then I alone the conquest prize,
When I insult a rival's eyes:
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart, which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Enter PETULANT *and* WITWOUD

MRS. MILLAMANT. Is your animosity composed, gentlemen?

[1] my life upon it.

WITWOUD. Raillery, raillery, madam; we have no animosity—we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity.—The falling out of wits is like the falling out of lovers. We agree in the main,[1] like treble and bass.—Ha, Petulant?

PETULANT. Aye, in the main—but when I have a humor to contradict—

WITWOUD. Aye, when he has a humor to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battledores; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

PETULANT. If he says black's black—if I have a humor to say 'tis blue—let that pass—all's one for that. If I have a humor to prove it, it must be granted.

WITWOUD. Not positively must—but it may—it may.

PETULANT. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

WITWOUD. Aye, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may.—That's a logical distinction now, madam.

MRS. MARWOOD. I perceive your debates are of importance and very learnedly handled.

PETULANT. Importance is one thing, and learning's another. But a debate's a debate; that I assert.

WITWOUD. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

PETULANT. No, I'm no enemy to learning. It hurts not me.

MRS. MARWOOD. That's a sign indeed it's no enemy to you.

PETULANT. No, no, it's no enemy to anybody but them that have it.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion. I wonder at the impudence of any illiterate man to offer to make love.

WITWOUD. That I confess I wonder at too.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ah! to marry an ignorant that can hardly read or write!

PETULANT. Why should a man be any further from being married, though he can't read, than he is from being hanged? The ordinary's[2] paid for setting the psalm, and the parish priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book—so all's one for that.

MRS. MILLAMANT. D'ye hear the creature?—Lord, here's company; I'll be gone.

[*Exeunt* MRS. MILLAMANT *and* MINCING]

[*Enter, at a distance*] SIR WILFULL WITWOUD *in a country riding habit,* [*followed by a* Footman]

WITWOUD. In the name of Bartlemew and his fair,[3] what have we here?

MRS. MARWOOD. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

WITWOUD. Not I.—Yes, I think it is he—I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the Revolution.

FOOTMAN. (*To* SIR WILFULL) Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you please to walk in, in the meantime—

SIR WILFULL. Dressing! What, it's but morning here I warrant, with you in London; we should count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire.—Why then, belike, my aunt han't dined yet,—ha, friend?

FOOTMAN. Your aunt, sir?

SIR WILFULL. My aunt, sir! Yes, my aunt, sir, and your lady, sir; your lady is my aunt, sir.—Why, what! Dost thou not know me, friend? Why, then send somebody hither that does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow,—ha?

FOOTMAN. A week, sir—longer than anybody in the house, except my lady's woman.

SIR WILFULL. Why, then belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou seest her,—ha, friend?

FOOTMAN. Why, truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in a morning, before she is dressed. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

SIR WILFULL. Well, prithee try what thou canst do; if thou canst not guess, inquire her

1 In the middle, or tenor, part.

2 chaplain. 3 See 47, 110 and n.

out,—dost hear, fellow?—and tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is in the house.

FOOTMAN. I shall, sir.

SIR WILFULL. —Hold ye; hear me, friend—a word with you in your ear. Prithee, who are these gallants?

FOOTMAN. Really, sir, I can't tell; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. [*Exit* Footman]

SIR WILFULL. Oons, this fellow knows less than a starling; I don't think a' knows his own name.

MRS. MARWOOD. Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behindhand in forgetfulness —I fancy he has forgot you too.

WITWOUD. I hope so—the devil take him that remembers first, I say.

SIR WILFULL. Save you, gentlemen and lady!

MRS. MARWOOD. For shame, Mr. Witwoud; why don't you speak to him?—[*To* SIR WILFULL] And you, sir.

WITWOUD. Petulant, speak.

PETULANT. [*To* SIR WILFULL] And you, sir.

SIR WILFULL. No offence, I hope. (*Salutes* MRS. MARWOOD)

MRS. MARWOOD. No, sure, sir.

WITWOUD. [*Aside*] This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence! ha! ha! ha! —To him; to him, Petulant, smoke him.[1]

PETULANT. [*Surveying him round*] It seems as if you had come a journey, sir;—hem, hem.

SIR WILFULL. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

PETULANT. No offence, I hope, sir.

WITWOUD. [*Aside*] Smoke[2] the boots, the boots!—Petulant, the boots! Ha! ha! ha!

SIR WILFULL. May be not, sir; thereafter, as 'tis meant, sir.

PETULANT. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

SIR WILFULL. Why, 'tis like you may, sir: if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may inquire further of my horse, sir.

PETULANT. Your horse, sir? your horse is an ass, sir!

SIR WILFULL. Do you speak by way of offence, sir?

MRS. MARWOOD. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir.—(*Aside*) 'Slife, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass before they find one another out.—(*Aloud*) You must not take anything amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends here, though it may be you don't know it.—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

SIR WILFULL. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud. So I write myself. No offence to anybody, I hope—and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

MRS. MARWOOD. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

SIR WILFULL. Hum! What, sure 'tis not—yea by'r Lady, but 'tis— 'sheart, I know not whether 'tis or no—yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin.[3] Brother Anthony! What, Tony, i'faith!—what, dost thou not know me? By'r Lady, nor I thee, thou art so becravated, and so beperiwigged!—'Sheart, why dost not speak? art thou overjoyed?

WITWOUD. Odso, brother, is it you?—your servant, brother.

SIR WILFULL. Your servant!—why yours, sir. Your servant again—'sheart, and your friend and servant to that—and a—and a—flap-dragon for your service, sir! and a hare's foot and a hare's scut for your service, sir! an you be so cold and so courtly.

WITWOUD. No offence, I hope, brother.

SIR WILFULL. 'Sheart, sir, but there is, and much offence!—A pox, is this your Inns o' Court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders and your betters?

WITWOUD. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop,[4] you may be as short as a Shrewsbury-cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town: you think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of ser-

1 tease him. 2 affront. 3 A high hill in Shropshire. 4 Shropshire.

geants—'tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

SIR WILFULL. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this—by'r Lady, I conjectured you were a fop since you began to change the style of your letters, and write on a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a *subpœna*. I might expect this when you left off "Honored Brother," and "hoping you are in good health," and so forth—to begin with a "Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch—'ods heart," and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude.—You could write news before you were out of your time,[1] when you lived with honest Pumple Nose, the attorney of Furnival's Inn—you could entreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrekin.[2] We could have gazettes, then, and Dawks's Letter, and the Weekly Bill, till of late days.

PETULANT. 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? of the family of the Furnivals? Ha! ha! ha!

WITWOUD. Aye, aye, but that was but for a while—not long, not long. Pshaw! I was not in my own power then; an orphan, and this fellow was my guardian. Aye, aye, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

SIR WILFULL. 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops—where, I suppose, you have served your time, and now you may set up for yourself.

MRS. MARWOOD. You intend to travel, sir, as I'm informed.

SIR WILFULL. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

PETULANT. And the wind serve.

SIR WILFULL. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask licence of you, sir; nor the weathercock your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir.—'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam—yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts—if an how that the peace holds, whereby that is, taxes abate.

MRS. MARWOOD. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures.

SIR WILFULL. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand shill I, shall I,[3] then; if I say't, I'll do't. But I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French, as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

MRS. MARWOOD. Here 's an academy in town for that use.

SIR WILFULL. There is? 'Tis like there may.

MRS. MARWOOD. No doubt you will return very much improved.

WITWOUD. Yes, refined, like a Dutch skipper from a whale-fishing.

Enter LADY WISHFORT *and* FAINALL

LADY WISHFORT. Nephew, you are welcome.

SIR WILFULL. Aunt, your servant.

FAINALL. Sir Wilfull, your most faithful servant.

SIR WILFULL. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

LADY WISHFORT. Cousin Witwoud, your servant; Mr. Petulant, your servant; nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink anything after your journey, nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almost ready.

SIR WILFULL. I'm very well, I thank you, aunt—however, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart, I was afraid you would have been in the fashion too, and have remembered to have forgot your relations. Here's your cousin Tony; belike, I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence.

1 released from indenture.
2 See p. 353, n. 3.
3 Cf. "shilly-shally."

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, he's a railleur, nephew—my cousin's a wit. And your great wits always rally their best friends to choose.[1] When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better.

(FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD *talk apart*)

SIR WILFULL. Why then, let him hold his tongue in the meantime, and rail when that day comes.

Enter MINCING

MINCING. Mem, I am come to acquaint your la'ship that dinner is impatient.

SIR WILFULL. Impatient! why then, belike it won't stay till I pull off my boots.—Sweetheart, can you help me to a pair of slippers?—My man's with his horses, I warrant.

LADY WISHFORT. Fie, fie, nephew! you would not pull off your boots here?—Go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you.

[*Exit* SIR WILFULL]

My nephew's a little unbred; you'll pardon him, madam.—Gentlemen, will you walk?—Marwood—

MRS. MARWOOD. I'll follow you, madam—before Sir Wilfull is ready.

Exeunt all but MRS. MARWOOD *and* FAINALL

FAINALL. Why then, Foible's a bawd—an arrant, rank, match-making bawd. And I, it seems, am a husband, a rank husband; and my wife a very arrant, rank wife—all in the way of the world. 'Sdeath, to be a cuckold by anticipation, a cuckold in embryo! Sure, I was born with budding antlers, like a young satyr or a citizen's child. 'Sdeath! to be outwitted—to be out-jilted—out-matrimony'd!—If I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat—but to crawl after, with my horns, like a snail, and outstripped by my wife—'tis scurvy wedlock.

MRS. MARWOOD. Then shake it off. You have often wished for an opportunity to part, and now you have it. But first prevent their plot—the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with to a foe—to Mirabell.

FAINALL. Damn him! that had been mine, had you not made that fond discovery—that had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my horns by that increase of fortune; I could have worn 'em tipped with gold, though my forehead had been furnished like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

MRS. MARWOOD. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her—I dare swear she had given up her game before she was married.

FAINALL. Hum! that may be. She might throw up her cards, but I'll be hanged if she did not put pam in her pocket.

MRS. MARWOOD. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

FAINALL. —The means, the means.

MRS. MARWOOD. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her! My lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece, and fortune, and all, at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

FAINALL. Faith, this has an appearance.

MRS. MARWOOD. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavor a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull; that may be an obstacle.

FAINALL. Oh, for that matter, leave me to manage him. I'll disable him for that; he will drink like a Dane. After dinner I'll set his hand in.

MRS. MARWOOD. Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady?

FAINALL. Why, faith, I'm thinking of it.—Let me see—I am married already, so

[1] at will.

that 's over. My wife has played the jade with me—well, that 's over too. I never loved her, or if I had, why that would have been over too by this time.—Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there 's an end of jealousy: weary of her I am, and shall be—no, there 's no end of that—no, no, that were too much to hope.—Thus far concerning my repose; now for my reputation. As to my own, I married not for it, so that 's out of the question; and as to my part in my wife's—why, she had parted with hers before; so bringing none to me, she can take none from me. 'Tis against all rule of play that I should lose to one who has not wherewithal to stake.

MRS. MARWOOD. Besides, you forgot marriage is honorable.

FAINALL. Hum, faith, and that's well thought on. Marriage is honorable, as you say; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being derived from so honorable a root?

MRS. MARWOOD. Nay, I know not; if the root be honorable, why not the branches?

FAINALL. So, so; why, this point 's clear—well, how do we proceed?

MRS. MARWOOD. I will contrive a letter which shall be delivered to my lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provoked if I could help it—because you know she knows some passages—nay, I expect all will come out. But let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discovered.

FAINALL. If the worst come to the worst, I'll turn my wife to grass. I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate, which I wheedled out of her, and that you shall partake at least.

MRS. MARWOOD. I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell. Now you'll be no more jealous?

FAINALL. Jealous! No, by this kiss. Let husbands be jealous, but let the lover still believe; or, if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows when he proves his mistress true. But let husbands' doubts convert to endless jealousy; or, if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest:

All husbands must or pain or shame endure;
The wise too jealous are, fools too secure.

Exeunt

ACT IV

SCENE I. [*Scene continues*]

Enter LADY WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE

LADY WISHFORT. Is Sir Rowland coming, sayest thou, Foible? And are things in order?

FOIBLE. Yes, madam, I have put wax lights in the sconces, and placed the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postilion to fill up the equipage.

LADY WISHFORT. Have you pulvilled the coachman and postilion, that they may not stink of the stable when Sir Rowland comes by?

FOIBLE. Yes, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained in all points with correspondence to his passion?

FOIBLE. All is ready, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. And—well—how do I look, Foible?

FOIBLE. Most killing well, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. Well, and how shall I receive him? in what figure shall I give his heart the first impression? There is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—no, I won't sit—I'll walk—aye, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance, and then turn full upon him—no, that will be too sudden. I'll lie,—aye, I'll lie down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room; there 's

a couch—yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch.—I won't lie neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—yes—and then as soon as he appears, start, aye, start and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—yes.—Oh, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch, in some confusion; it shows the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and recomposing airs beyond comparison. Hark! there's a coach.

FOIBLE. 'Tis he, madam.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, dear!—Has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant? I ordered him.

FOIBLE. Sir Wilfull is set in drinking, madam, in the parlor.

LADY WISHFORT. Odds my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go—when they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland. [*Exit* LADY WISHFORT]

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT *and* MRS. FAINALL

FOIBLE. Madam, I stayed here to tell your ladyship that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half-hour for an opportunity to talk with you—though my lady's orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfull together. Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell that you are at leisure?

MRS. MILLAMANT. No. What would the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself—bid him come another time. (*Repeating, and walking about*)

> There never yet was woman made
> Nor shall, but to be cursed.

That's hard!

MRS. FAINALL. You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

MRS. MILLAMANT. He? Aye, and filthy verses—so I am.

FOIBLE. Sir Wilfull is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Aye, if you please, Foible, send him away, or send him hither—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—shall I? Aye, let the wretch come. *Exit* FOIBLE (*Repeating*)

> Thyrsis, a youth of the inspirèd train.

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull—thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool. Thou art married and hast patience—I would confer with my own thoughts.

MRS. FAINALL. I am obliged to you that you would make me your proxy in this affair, but I have business of my own.

Enter SIR WILFULL

MRS. FAINALL. O Sir Wilfull, you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point now or never.

SIR WILFULL. Yes; my aunt will have it so—I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first before I am acquainted.—(*This while* MILLAMANT *walks about repeating to herself*)—But I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is, upon further acquaintance—so for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave. If so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company—

MRS. FAINALL. Oh, fie, Sir Wilfull! What! You must not be daunted.

SIR WILFULL. Daunted! No, that's not it; it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient till further acquaintance, that's all—your servant.

MRS. FAINALL. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favorable an opportunity if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door. *Exit*

SIR WILFULL. Nay, nay, cousin—I have forgot my gloves!—What d'ye do?—'Sheart, a' has locked the door indeed, I think. Nay, Cousin Fainall, open the door! Pshaw, what a vixen trick is this?—Nay, now a' has seen me too.—Cousin, I made bold to pass through as it were—I think this door's enchanted!

MRS. MILLAMANT. (*Repeating*)

I prithee spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy.

SIR WILFULL. Anan?[1] Cousin, your servant.
MRS. MILLAMANT. (*Repeating*)

That foolish trifle of a heart.

Sir Wilfull!

SIR WILFULL. Yes—your servant. No offence, I hope, cousin.

MRS. MILLAMANT. (*Repeating*)

I swear it will not do its part,
Though thou dost thine, employ'st thy power and art.

Natural, easy Suckling!

SIR WILFULL. Anan? Suckling! no such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank Heaven, I'm no minor.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ah, rustic, ruder than Gothic!

SIR WILFULL. Well, well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin; in the meanwhile I must answer in plain English.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Have you any business with me, Sir Wilfull?

SIR WILFULL. Not at present, cousin.—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening; if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have sought a walk with you.

MRS. MILLAMANT. A walk! what then?

SIR WILFULL. Nay, nothing—only for the walk's sake, that's all.

MRS. MILLAMANT. I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion. I loathe the country, and everything that relates to it.

SIR WILFULL. Indeed! ha! Look ye, look ye—you do? Nay, 'tis like you may—here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like; that must be confessed, indeed.

MRS. MILLAMANT. *Ah, l'étourdi!* I hate the town too.

SIR WILFULL. Dear heart, that's much—ha! that you should hate 'em both! Ha! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ha! ha! ha! yes, 'tis like I may.—You have nothing further to say to me?

SIR WILFULL. Not at present, cousin.—'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess—however, that's as time shall try—but spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

MRS. MILLAMANT. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me; I have just now a little business—

SIR WILFULL. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case.—When you're disposed, when you're disposed. Now's as well as another time, and another time as well as now. All's one for that—yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold, as they say. [*Bowing*] Cousin, your servant.—I think this door's locked.

MRS. MILLAMANT. You may go this way, sir.

SIR WILFULL. Your servant; then with your leave I'll return to my company. *Exit*

MRS. MILLAMANT. Aye, aye; ha! ha! ha!

Like Phœbus sung the no less amorous boy.

Enter MIRABELL

MIRABELL. "Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy." Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my search more curious, or is this pretty artifice contrived to signify that here the chase must end, and my pursuits be crowned? For you can fly no further.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Vanity! no—I'll fly, and be followed to the last moment. Though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last—nay, and afterwards.

MIRABELL. What, after the last?

[1] What did you say?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Oh, I should think I was poor and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduced to an inglorious ease and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

MIRABELL. But do not you know that when favors are conferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure?

MRS. MILLAMANT. It may be in things of common application; but never, sure, in love. Oh, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent of the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature as the saucy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air. Ah! I'll never marry unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure. 223

MIRABELL. Would you have 'em both before marriage? or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other till after grace? 227

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ah! don't be impertinent.—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? my faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu—my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin*,[1] *adieu*.—I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible—positively, Mirabell, I'll lie abed in a morning as long as I please. 237

MIRABELL. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will—and d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I'm married; positively, I won't be called names. 243

MIRABELL. Names!

MRS. MILLAMANT. Aye,—as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—I shall never bear that. Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis; nor go to Hyde Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers, and then never to be seen there together again—as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well-bred. Let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while, and as well-bred as if we were not married at all. 262

MIRABELL. Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable. 265

MRS. MILLAMANT. Trifles—as liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please, and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance: or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations.—Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humor, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

MIRABELL. Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account.—Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband?

MRS. MILLAMANT. You have free leave. Propose your utmost; speak and spare not.

MIRABELL. I thank you.—*Imprimis*[2] then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidant or intimate of your own sex—no she-friend to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you—

1 sweets, ye morning naps.

2 first.

a fop, scrambling to the play in a mask—then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out—and rail at me for missing the play and disappointing the frolic which you had, to pick me up and prove my constancy.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Detestable *imprimis!* I go to the play in a mask!

MIRABELL. *Item*, I article, that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall; and while it passes current with me, that you endeavor not to new-coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oiled-skins and I know not what—hogs' bones, hares' gall, pig-water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in what-d'ye-call-it Court. *Item*, I shut my doors against all bawds with baskets, and pennyworths of muslin, china, fans, atlases, etc.—*Item*, when you shall be breeding—

MRS. MILLAMANT. Ah! name it not.

MIRABELL. Which may be presumed, with a blessing on our endeavors—

MRS. MILLAMANT. Odious endeavors!

MIRABELL. I denounce against all strait lacing, squeezing for a shape, till you mould my boy's head like a sugar-loaf, and instead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit—but with proviso, that you exceed not in your province, but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee; as likewise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk—such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—but that on no account you encroach upon the men's prerogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows: for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all aniseed, cinnamon, citron, and Barbadoes waters,[1] together with ratafia, and the most noble spirit of clary[2]—but for cowslip wine, poppy water, and all dormitives, those I allow.—These provisos admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

MRS. MILLAMANT. O horrid provisos! filthy strong-waters!—I toast fellows!—odious men! I hate your odious provisos.

MIRABELL. Then we're agreed! Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Enter MRS. FAINALL

MRS. MILLAMANT. Fainall, what shall I do? Shall I have him?—I think I must have him.

MRS. FAINALL. Aye, aye, take him, take him; what should you do?

MRS. MILLAMANT. Well then—I'll take my death, I'm in a horrid fright.—Fainall, I shall never say it—well—I think—I'll endure you.

MRS. FAINALL. Fie! fie! Have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms; for I am sure you have a mind to him.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Are you? I think I have—and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too. Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kissed, nor I won't be thanked—here, kiss my hand though.—So, hold your tongue now; don't say a word.

MRS. FAINALL. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience; you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming, and in my conscience if she should see you, would fall into fits, and maybe not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your ecstasies for another occasion, and slip down the backstairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Aye, go, go. In the meantime I suppose you have said something to please me.

MIRABELL. I am all obedience.

[*Exit* MIRABELL]

MRS. FAINALL. Yonder, Sir Wilfull's drunk, and so noisy that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease

1 Cordial flavored with orange peel.
2 Wine, honey, and spices.

him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking. What they may have done by this time I know not, but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing, for I find I love him violently.

MRS. FAINALL. So it seems, when you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had best take up with Sir Wilfull.

MRS. MILLAMANT. How can you name that superannuated lubber?—Foh!

Enter WITWOUD *from drinking*

MRS. FAINALL. So! Is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

WITWOUD. Left 'em? I could stay no longer. I have laughed like ten christ'nings —I am tipsy with laughing. If I had stayed any longer I should have burst— I must have been let out and pieced in the sides like an unsized camlet.[1]—Yes, yes, the fray is composed; my lady came in like a *noli prosequi*,[2] and stopped their proceedings.

MRS. MILLAMANT. What was the dispute?

WITWOUD. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage, and so fell a sputtering at one another like two roasting apples.

Enter PETULANT, *drunk*

WITWOUD. Now, Petulant, all's over, all's well. Gad, my head begins to whim it about —Why dost thou not speak? Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

PETULANT. Look you, Mrs. Millamant— if you can love me, dear nymph, say it— and that's the conclusion. Pass on, or pass off—that's all.

WITWOUD. Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *decimo sexto*, my dear Lacedemonian.[3] Sirrah Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

PETULANT. Witwoud—you are an annihilator of sense.

WITWOUD. Thou art a retailer of phrases, and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of shorthand.

PETULANT. Thou art (without a figure) just one-half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest.—A Gemini of asses split would make just four of you.

WITWOUD. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard seed; kiss me for that.

PETULANT. Stand off!—I'll kiss no more males—I have kissed your twin yonder in a humor of reconciliation, till he (*Hiccups*) rises upon my stomach like a radish.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Eh! filthy creature! —What was the quarrel?

PETULANT. There was no quarrel—there might have been a quarrel.

WITWOUD. If there had been words enow between 'em to have expressed provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

PETULANT. You were the quarrel.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Me!

PETULANT. If I have a humor to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises. —If you are not handsome, what then, if I have a humor to prove it? If I shall have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face the next time yourself. I'll go sleep.

WITWOUD. Do; wrap thyself up like a wood-louse, and dream revenge—and hear me; if thou canst learn to write by tomorrow morning, pen me a challenge.—I'll carry it for thee.

PETULANT. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider!—Go flea dogs, and read romances! —I'll go to bed to my maid.

Exit [PETULANT]

MRS. FAINALL. He's horridly drunk.— How came you all in this pickle?

WITWOUD. A plot! a plot! to get rid of the knight—your husband's advice, but he sneaked off.

Enter LADY [WISHFORT], *and then* SIR WILFULL, *drunk*

LADY WISHFORT. Out upon't, out upon't! At years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate!

1 Light linen or woolen cloth.
2 to be unwilling to prosecute.
3 I.e. taciturn one.

SIR WILFULL. No offence, aunt.

LADY WISHFORT. Offence! as I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you. Foh! how you stink of wine! D'ye think my niece will ever endure such a Borachio! you're an absolute Borachio.

SIR WILFULL. Borachio?

LADY WISHFORT. At a time when you should commence an amour and put your best foot foremost—

SIR WILFULL. 'Sheart, an you grutch me your liquor, make a bill—give me more drink, and take my purse—(*Sings*)

Prithee fill me the glass,
Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
He that whines for a lass,
Is an ignorant ass,
For a bumper has not its fellow.

But if you would have me marry my cousin—say the word, and I'll do't. Wilfull will do't; that's the word. Wilfull will do't; that's my crest—My motto I have forgot.

LADY WISHFORT. [*To* MRS. MILLAMANT] My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin, but 'tis with drinking your health.—O' my word, you are obliged to him.

SIR WILFULL. *In vino veritas*,[1] aunt.—If I drunk your health to-day, cousin—I am a Borachio. But if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilfull will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round.—Tony!—Odds heart, where's Tony!—Tony's an honest fellow; but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.—(*Sings*)

We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys,
Put the glass then around with the sun, boys,
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk every night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.

The sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes.—Your Antipodes are a good, rascally sort of topsy-turvy fellows: if I had a bumper, I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to 'em.—A match or no match, cousin with the hard name?—Aunt, Wilfull will do't. If she has her maidenhead, let her look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the meantime, and cry out at the nine months' end.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Your pardon, madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful.—Eh! how he smells! I shall be overcome, if I stay.—Come, cousin.

Exeunt MRS. MILLAMANT *and* MRS. FAINALL

LADY WISHFORT. Smells! He would poison a tallow-chandler and his family! Beastly creature, I know not what to do with him!—Travel, quotha! Aye, travel, travel—get thee gone, get thee gone; get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks!—for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly pagan!

SIR WILFULL. Turks? No; no Turks, aunt. Your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman, is a dry stinkard—no offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian. I cannot find by the map that your Mufti is orthodox—whereby it is a plain case that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and (*Hiccups*)—Greek for claret.—(*Sings*)

To drink is a Christian diversion,
Unknown to the Turk or the Persian:
Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules,
And be damned over tea-cups and coffee.
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your sultan and sophy!

Ah, Tony!

Enter FOIBLE, [*who whispers to* LADY WISHFORT]

LADY WISHFORT. (*Aside to* FOIBLE)—Sir Rowland impatient? Good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbril?—(*Aloud*)

[1] truth in wine.

Go lie down and sleep, you sot!—or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broomsticks.—Call up the wenches. 571

[*Exit* FOIBLE]

SIR WILFULL. Ahey! wenches; where are the wenches?

LADY WISHFORT. Dear Cousin Witwoud, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation—you will oblige me to all futurity. 578

WITWOUD. Come, knight.—Pox on him, I don't know what to say to him.—Will you go to a cock-match?

SIR WILFULL. With a wench, Tony? Is she a shakebag,[1] sirrah? Let me bite your cheek for that. 584

WITWOUD. Horrible! he has a breath like a bagpipe!—Aye, aye; come, will you march, my Salopian?

SIR WILFULL. Lead on, little Tony—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tantony. Sirrah, thou shalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy pig. (*Sings*) 591

And a fig for your sultan and sophy.

[*Exeunt* SIR WILFULL *and* WITWOUD]

LADY WISHFORT. This will never do. It will never make a match—at least before he has been abroad. 595

Enter WAITWELL, *disguised as* SIR ROWLAND

LADY WISHFORT. Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness!—I have more pardons to ask than the pope distributes in the year of jubilee. But I hope, where there is likely to be so near an alliance, we may unbend the severity of decorums and dispense with a little ceremony. 603

WAITWELL. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport; and till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalized on the rack; and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation. 608

LADY WISHFORT. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland, and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence.—But a day or two for decency of marriage— 613

WAITWELL. For decency of funeral, madam! The delay will break my heart—or, if that should fail, I shall be poisoned. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me; and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction.—That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper! 623

LADY WISHFORT. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly, I would contribute much, both to the saving of your life and the accomplishment of your revenge—not that I respect myself, though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

WAITWELL. Perfidious to you? 630

LADY WISHFORT. O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and the tremblings, the ardors and the ecstasies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the handgripings, the pangs and the pathetic regards of his protesting eyes!—Oh, no memory can register! 640

WAITWELL. What, my rival! is the rebel my rival?—a' dies!

LADY WISHFORT. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland; starve him gradually, inch by inch. 645

WAITWELL. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be barefoot; in a month out at knees with begging an alms.—He shall starve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle's end upon a save-all.[2] 651

LADY WISHFORT. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way—you are no novice in the labyrinth of love; you have the clue.—But as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widowhood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of

1 A trivial woman.

2 A special holder for butt-ends of candles.

continence. I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials—

WAITWELL. Far be it from me—

LADY WISHFORT. If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a prostitution of decorums; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance—

WAITWELL. I esteem it so—

LADY WISHFORT. Or else you wrong my condescension.

WAITWELL. I do not, I do not!

LADY WISHFORT. Indeed you do.

WAITWELL. I do not, fair shrine of virtue!

LADY WISHFORT. If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient,—

WAITWELL. Dear madam, no. You are all camphor and frankincense, all chastity and odor.

LADY WISHFORT. Or that—

Enter FOIBLE

FOIBLE. Madam, the dancers are ready; and there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

LADY WISHFORT. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? Think favorably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honor's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly.

[*Exit* LADY WISHFORT]

WAITWELL. Fie, fie!—What a slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any cordial? I want spirits.

FOIBLE. What a washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a fine lady!

WAITWELL. Oh, she is the antidote to desire! Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't—I shall have no appetite to iteration of nuptials this eight-and-forty hours.—By this hand I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow!

[*Re-*]*enter* LADY WISHFORT, *with a letter*

LADY WISHFORT. Call in the dancers.—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. (*A dance*) Now, with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter.—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy, I would burn it.—Speak, if it does—but you may see by the superscription it is like a woman's hand.

FOIBLE. (*Aside to* WAITWELL) By Heaven! Mrs. Marwood's, I know it.—My heart aches—get it from her.

WAITWELL. A woman's hand? No, madam, that's no woman's hand; I see that already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

LADY WISHFORT. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return by a frank communication.—You shall see it—we'll open it together—look you here.—(*Reads*)—"Madam, though unknown to you"—Look you there, 'tis from nobody that I know—"I have that honor for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a rascal."—Oh, heavens! what's this?

FOIBLE. (*Aside*) Unfortunate! all's ruined!

WAITWELL. How, how! Let me see, let me see!—(*Reads*) "A rascal, and disguised and suborned for that imposture,"—O villainy! O villainy!—"by the contrivance of—"

LADY WISHFORT. I shall faint!—I shall die, I shall die!—Oh!

FOIBLE. (*Aside to* WAITWELL) Say 'tis your nephew's hand—quickly, his plot,—swear it, swear it!

WAITWELL. Here's a villain! Madam, don't you perceive it? Don't you see it?

LADY WISHFORT. Too well, too well! I have seen too much.

WAITWELL. I told you at first I knew the hand.—A woman's hand! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand—your Roman hand.—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him!

FOIBLE. O treachery!—But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

WAITWELL. Sure?—Am I here? Do I live?—Do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him in the same character.

LADY WISHFORT. How!

FOIBLE. Oh, what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture!—This was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguised to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving when he stole by me and would have hid his face.

LADY WISHFORT. How, how!—I heard the villain was in the house, indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addresses.

FOIBLE. Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber! but I would not tell your ladyship to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

WAITWELL. Enough; his date is short.

FOIBLE. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

WAITWELL. Law! I care not for law. I can but die and 'tis in a good cause.—My lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

LADY WISHFORT. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight. If you should be killed, I must never show my face; or hanged—oh, consider my reputation, Sir Rowland!—No, you shan't fight.—I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

WAITWELL. I am charmed, madam; I obey. But some proof you must let me give you; I'll go for a black box which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort. Bring the black box.

WAITWELL. And may I presume to bring a contract to be signed this night? May I hope so far?

LADY WISHFORT. Bring what you will, but come alive. Pray, come alive! Oh, this is a happy discovery!

WAITWELL. Dead or alive I'll come—and married we will be in spite of treachery—aye, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned nephew. Come, my buxom widow:

Ere long you shall substantial proofs receive,
That I'm an errant knight—

FOIBLE. (*Aside*) Or arrant knave.

Exeunt

ACT V

SCENE I. [*Scene continues*]

LADY WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE

LADY WISHFORT. Out of my house! Out of my house, thou viper! thou serpent, that I have fostered! thou bosom traitress, that I raised from nothing!—Begone! begone! begone!—go! go!—That I took from washing of old gauze and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose over a chafing-dish of starved embers, and dining behind a tavern rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage!—Go, go! Starve again! Do, do!

FOIBLE. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

LADY WISHFORT. Away! out! out!—Go, set up for yourself again!—Do, drive a trade! do, with your three-pennyworth of small ware, flaunting upon a packthread under a brandy-seller's bulk, or against a dead wall by a ballad-monger! Go, hang out an old Frisoneer gorget,[1] with a yard of yellow colbertine again! Do! An old gnawed mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glass necklace with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cap with one ear! Go, go, drive a trade!—These were your commodities, you treacherous trull! this was the merchandise you dealt in when I took you into my house, placed you next myself, and made you governante of my whole family!—You have forgot this, have you, now you have feathered your nest?

FOIBLE. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me; have but a moment's patience. I'll

[1] A woolen throat protection.

confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduced me. I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling tongue; your ladyship's own wisdom has been deluded by him—then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? O madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladyship should come to no damage!—Or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me.

LADY WISHFORT. No damage! What, to betray me, and marry me to a cast[1] serving-man! to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decayed pimp! No damage! O thou frontless impudence, more than a big-bellied actress! 49

FOIBLE. Pray, do but hear me, madam! He could not marry your ladyship, madam.—No, indeed; his marriage was to have been void in law, for he was married to me first, to secure your ladyship. He could not have bedded your ladyship; for if he had consummated with your ladyship, he must have run the risk of the law, and been put upon his clergy.[2]—Yes, indeed, I inquired of the law in that case before I would meddle or make.[3] 60

LADY WISHFORT. What, then I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems!—While you were catering for Mirabell, I have been broker for you! What, have you made a passive bawd of me?—This exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigails and Andrews[4]!—I'll couple you!—Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander[5]! I'll Duke's-place[6] you, as I'm a person! Your turtle is in custody already: you shall coo in the same cage if there be a constable or warrant in the parish. 74

[*Exit* LADY WISHFORT]

FOIBLE. Oh, that ever I was born! Oh, that I was ever married!—A bride!—aye, I shall be a Bridewell-bride.—Oh!

1 discharged.
2 See p. 292, l. 385.
3 interfere.
4 Names for servants.
5 A lover in *Orlando Furioso*.
6 I. e. marry you.

Enter MRS. FAINALL

MRS. FAINALL. Poor Foible, what's the matter? 79

FOIBLE. O madam, my lady's gone for a constable! I shall be had to a justice and put to Bridewell to beat hemp. Poor Waitwell's gone to prison already. 83

MRS. FAINALL. Have a good heart, Foible; Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing. 87

FOIBLE. Yes, yes; I know it, madam. She was in my lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady, and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell when he pretended to go for the papers, and in the meantime Mrs. Marwood declared all to my lady. 95

MRS. FAINALL. Was there no mention made of me in the letter? My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy? I fancy Marwood has not told her, though she has told my husband. 100

FOIBLE. Yes, madam, but my lady did not see that part; we stifled the letter before she read so far—Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladyship, then?

MRS. FAINALL. Aye, all's out—my affair with Mirabell—everything discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort. 108

FOIBLE. Indeed, madam; and so 'tis a comfort if you knew all—he has been even with your ladyship, which I could have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my goodwill. I had rather bring friends together than set 'em at distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for. 117

MRS FAINALL. Sayest thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

FOIBLE. I can take my oath of it, madam; so can Mrs. Mincing. We have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when you were at Hyde Park,

and we were thought to have gone a-walking, but we went up unawares—though we were sworn to secrecy, too; Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it, but it was but a book of poems. So long as it was not a Bible oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

MRS. FAINALL. This discovery is the most opportune thing I could wish.—Now, Mincing!

Enter MINCING

MINCING. My lady would speak with Mrs. Foible, mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my lady's closet till my old lady's anger is abated. Oh, my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

MRS. FAINALL. Do your lady and Mirabell know that?

MINCING. Yes, mem; they have sent me to see if Sir Wilfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pounds.—Oh, come, Mrs. Foible, I hear my old lady.

MRS. FAINALL. Foible, you must tell Mincing that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

FOIBLE. Yes, yes, madam.

MINCING. Oh, yes, mem, I'll vouch anything for your ladyship's service, be what it will. [*Exeunt* MINCING *and* FOIBLE]

Enter LADY WISHFORT *and* MRS. MARWOOD

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness! To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland.—And now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honor of my house and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves and be shepherdesses.

MRS. MARWOOD. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, daughter, daughter! is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and, as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mould of virtue? I have not only been a mould but a pattern for you and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.

MRS. FAINALL. I don't understand your ladyship.

LADY WISHFORT. Not understand? Why, have you not been naught? have you not been sophisticated? Not understand! here I am ruined to compound for[1] your caprices and your cuckoldoms. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough—

MRS. FAINALL. I am wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation—as false as hell, as false as your friend there, aye, or your friend's friend, my false husband!

MRS. MARWOOD. My friend, Mrs. Fainall!—Your husband my friend? What do you mean?

MRS. FAINALL. I know what I mean, madam, and so do you; and so shall the world at a time convenient.

MRS. MARWOOD. I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladyship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will

1 make amends for.

pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair in which I am not personally concerned.

LADY WISHFORT. O dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns!—(*To* MRS. FAINALL) You ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature! she deserves more from you than all your life can accomplish.—(*To* MRS. MARWOOD) Oh, don't leave me destitute in this perplexity!—no, stick to me, my good genius.

MRS. FAINALL. I tell you, madam, you are abused.—Stick to you! aye, like a leech, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter,[1] in composition for me. I defy 'em all. Let 'em prove their aspersions; I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial.

[*Exit* MRS. FAINALL]

LADY WISHFORT. Why—if she should be innocent, if she should be wronged after all—ha!—I don't know what to think—and I promise you her education has been unexceptionable—I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men. Aye, friend, she would ha' shrieked if she had but seen a man, till she was in her teens. As I am a person, 'tis true—she was never suffered to play with a male child, though but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender. Oh, she never looked a man in the face but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments and his sleek face, till she was going in her fifteen.

MRS. MARWOOD. 'Twas much she should be deceived so long.

LADY WISHFORT. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to have been catechized by him; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeak nothing but bawdy, and the basses roar blasphemy. Oh, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book!—and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore? and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a playhouse! O dear friend, I can't believe it. No, no! As she says, let him prove it—let him prove it.

MRS. MARWOOD. Prove it, madam? What, and have your name prostituted in a public court—yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers! To be ushered in with an "O yez" of scandal, and have your case opened by an old fumbling lecher in a quoif[2] like a man-midwife; to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters and quibblers by the statute; and become a jest against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record—not even in Domesday Book; to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard, and fidgets off and on his cushion as if he had swallowed cantharides,[3] or sat upon cowitch!—

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, 'tis very hard!

MRS. MARWOOD. And then to have my young revellers of the Temple take notes, like 'prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it all over again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-house.

LADY WISHFORT. Worse and worse!

MRS. MARWOOD. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here, 'twere well. But it must, after this, be consigned by the shorthand writers to the public press; and from thence be transferred to the hands, nay into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's. And this you must hear till you are stunned—nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

1 Used as a token.

2 The hood required by law for this profession.

3 A paste for blistering.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, 'tis insupportable! No, no, dear friend, make it up, make it up; aye, aye, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all—anything, everything for composition.

MRS. MARWOOD. Nay, madam, I advise nothing; I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniences which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall. If he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, aye, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood; no, no, I do not doubt it.

Enter FAINALL

FAINALL. Well, madam, I have suffered myself to be overcome by the importunity of this lady, your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life, on condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

LADY WISHFORT. Never to marry!

FAINALL. No more Sir Rowlands; the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

MRS. MARWOOD. That condition, I dare answer, my lady will consent to without difficulty; she has already but too much experienced the perfidiousness of men.—Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency—

FAINALL. Oh, if you are prescribed marriage, you shall be considered; I only will reserve to myself the power to choose for you. If your physic be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune not made over already, and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

LADY WISHFORT. This is most inhumanly savage, exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

FAINALL. I learned it from his Czarish majesty's retinue, in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pounds which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession, and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

LADY WISHFORT. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

FAINALL. I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

LADY WISHFORT. You will grant me time to consider?

FAINALL. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand till more sufficient deeds can be perfected—which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the meanwhile I'll go for the said instrument, and till my return you may balance this matter in your own discretion. [*Exit* FAINALL]

LADY WISHFORT. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel. Must I be subject to this merciless villain?

MRS. MARWOOD. 'Tis severe indeed, madam, that you should smart for your daughter's wantonness.

LADY WISHFORT. 'Twas against my consent that she married this barbarian, but she would have him, though her year was not out.—Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus! Well, that was my choice, this is hers: she is matched now with a witness.—I shall be mad!—Dear friend, is there no comfort for me? must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT *and* SIR WILFULL WITWOUD

SIR WILFULL. Aunt, your servant.

LADY WISHFORT. Out, caterpillar! Call not me aunt! I know thee not! 409

SIR WILFULL. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say.—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I have committed no offence, aunt—and if I did I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke anything, I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my cousin; so pray let's all be friends. She and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness. 422

LADY WISHFORT. How's this, dear niece? —Have I any comfort? Can this be true?

MRS. MILLAMANT. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam, and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinformed. I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood; and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your ladyship's presence. He is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

LADY WISHFORT. Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience, but I cannot admit that traitor.—I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a gorgon; if I see him I fear I shall turn to stone, and petrify incessantly. 442

MRS. MILLAMANT. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you. 446

LADY WISHFORT. Are you sure it will be the last time?—If I were sure of that—shall I never see him again? 449

MRS. MILLAMANT. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

SIR WILFULL. 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt; let him come in. Why, we are sworn brothers and fellow-travellers.—We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I.—He is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been overseas once already, and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again only to bear me company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in. An I set on't once, he shall come in; and see who'll hinder him. 462

[*Exit* SIR WILFULL]

MRS. MARWOOD. This is precious fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

LADY WISHFORT. O dear Marwood, you are not going? 467

MRS. MARWOOD. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately. [*Exit* MRS. MARWOOD]

[*Re-enter* SIR WILFULL *conducting*] MIRABELL

SIR WILFULL. Look up, man, I'll stand by you. 'Sbud an she do frown, she can't kill you; besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own. 'Sheart, an she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

MIRABELL. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy. [*To* LADY WISHFORT] Ah, madam, there was a time!—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of sighing at your feet. Nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain. I come not to plead for favor—nay, not for pardon; I am a suppliant only for your pity. I am going where I never shall behold you more—

SIR WILFULL. How, fellow-traveller! you shall go by yourself then. 491

MIRABELL. Let me be pitied first, and afterwards forgotten.—I ask no more.

SIR WILFULL. By'r Lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt! Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt. Why, you must, an you are a Christian.

MIRABELL. Consider, madam, in reality you could not receive much prejudice. It was an innocent device; though I confess it had a face of guiltiness, it was at most an artifice which love contrived. And errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial. At least think it is punishment enough that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear, that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet—nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

SIR WILFULL. An he does not move me, would I may never be o' the quorum! An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again, I would I might never take shipping!—Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther than a little mouth glue, and that's hardly dry—one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis dissolved.

LADY WISHFORT. Well, nephew, upon your account—Ah, he has a false insinuating tongue!—Well sir, I will stifle my just resentment at my nephew's request.—I will endeavor what I can to forget, but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

MIRABELL. It is in writing, and with papers of concern; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

LADY WISHFORT. (*Aside*) Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue!—When I did not see him, I could have bribed a villain to his assassination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smothered in my breast.

Enter FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD

FAINALL. Your date of deliberation, madam, is expired. Here is the instrument; are you prepared to sign?

LADY WISHFORT. If I were prepared, I am not impowered. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having matched herself by my direction to Sir Wilfull.

FAINALL. That sham is too gross to pass on me—though 'tis imposed on you, madam.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Sir, I have given my consent.

MIRABELL. And, sir, I have resigned my pretensions.

SIR WILFULL. And, sir, I assert my right and will maintain it in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. 'Sheart, an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox[1] by my thigh shall hack your instrument of ram vellum to shreds, sir! It shall not be sufficient for a mittimus[2] or a tailor's measure. Therefore withdraw your instrument, sir, or by'r Lady, I shall draw mine.

LADY WISHFORT. Hold, nephew, hold!

MRS. MILLAMANT. Good Sir Wilfull, respite your valor!

FAINALL. Indeed! Are you provided of a guard, with your single beef-eater there? But I'm prepared for you, and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use, as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant.—[*To* MRS. MILLAMANT] I suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right.—You may draw your fox if you please, sir, and make a bear-garden flourish somewhere else, for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turned adrift, like a leaky hulk, to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree.

LADY WISHFORT. Is there no means, no remedy to stop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistence, to my daughter's fortune?

FAINALL. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

MIRABELL. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me—or else perhaps I could advise—

1 sword.

2 A writ enjoining a jailer to guard a prisoner well.

LADY WISHFORT. Oh, what?—what? To save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to anything to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

MIRABELL. Aye, madam, but that is too late; my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her who only could have made me a compensation for all my services. But be it as it may, I am resolved I'll serve you! You shall not be wronged in this savage manner.

LADY WISHFORT. How, dear Mr. Mirabell, can you be so generous at last? But it is not possible. Harkee, I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

MIRABELL. Will you? I'll take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, aye;—anybody, anybody!

MIRABELL. Foible is one, and a penitent.

Enter MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE, *and* MINCING

MRS. MARWOOD. [*Aside to* FAINALL] Oh, my shame! (MIRABELL *and* LADY WISHFORT *go to* MRS. FAINALL *and* FOIBLE) These corrupt things are brought hither to expose me.

FAINALL. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it; 'tis but the way of the world. That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one tittle of my terms; no, I will insist the more.

FOIBLE. Yes, indeed, madam, I'll take my Bible oath of it.

MINCING. And so will I, mem.

LADY WISHFORT. O Marwood, Marwood, art thou false? My friend deceive me? Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

MRS. MARWOOD. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice to give credit against your friend to the aspersions of two such mercenary trulls?

MINCING. Mercenary, mem? I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secrecy upon Messalina's poems. Mercenary! No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

FAINALL. Go, you are an insignificant thing!—Well, what are you the better for this? Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer.—You, thing that was a wife, shall smart for this! I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy shame; your body shall be naked as your reputation.

MRS. FAINALL. I despise you and defy your malice!—You have aspersed me wrongfully—I have proved your falsehood! Go, you and your treacherous—I will not name it, but—starve together. Perish!

FAINALL. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear.—Madam, I'll be fooled no longer.

LADY WISHFORT. Ah, Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

MIRABELL. Oh, in good time. Your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

Enter WAITWELL *with a box of writings*

LADY WISHFORT. O Sir Rowland!—Well, rascal!

WAITWELL. What your ladyship pleases. I have brought the black box at last, madam.

MIRABELL. Give it me.—Madam, you remember your promise?

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, dear sir.

MIRABELL. Where are the gentlemen?

WAITWELL. At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

FAINALL. 'Sdeath, what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

Enter PETULANT *and* WITWOUD

PETULANT. How now! What's the matter? Whose hand's out?

WITWOUD. Heyday! What, are you all got together like players at the end of the last act?

MIRABELL. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

WITWOUD. Aye, I do; my hand I remember—Petulant set his mark.

MIRABELL. You wrong him. His name is fairly written, as shall appear.—(*Undoing the box*) You do not remember, gentlemen, anything of what that parchment contained?

WITWOUD. No.

PETULANT. Not I; I writ, I read nothing.

MIRABELL. Very well, now you shall know.—Madam, your promise.

LADY WISHFORT. Aye, aye, sir, upon my honor.

MIRABELL. Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune—

FAINALL. Sir! pretended!

MIRABELL. Yes, sir. I say that this lady while a widow, having it seems received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she could never have suspected—she did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please—(*Holding out the parchment*) though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

FAINALL. Very likely, sir. What's here?—Damnation! (*Reads*) "A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell."—Confusion!

MIRABELL. Even so, sir; 'tis the way of the world, sir,—of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady?

FAINALL. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be revenged.

(*Offers to run at* MRS. FAINALL)

SIR WILFULL. Hold, sir! Now you may make your bear-garden flourish somewhere else, sir.

FAINALL. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir, be sure you shall.—Let me pass, oaf!

[*Exit* FAINALL]

MRS. FAINALL. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment; you had better give it vent.

MRS. MARWOOD. Yes, it shall have vent—and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt. [*Exit* MRS. MARWOOD]

LADY WISHFORT. O daughter, daughter! 'Tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

MRS. FAINALL. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

LADY WISHFORT. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine.—First, I pardon, for your sake, Sir Rowland there, and Foible; the next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that—

MIRABELL. For that, madam, give yourself no trouble; let me have your consent. Sir Wilfull is my friend. He has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action for our service, and now designs to prosecute his travels.

SIR WILFULL. 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another. My resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't I must do't. And if these two gentlemen would travel too, I think they may be spared.

PETULANT. For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or on.

WITWOUD. Egad, I understand nothing of the matter; I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

LADY WISHFORT. [*To* MIRABELL] Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

MRS. MILLAMANT. Why does not the man take me? Would you have me give myself to you over again?

MIRABELL. Aye, and over and over again; for I would have you as often as possibly I can. (*Kisses her hand*) Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well; that's all my fear.

SIR WILFULL. 'Sheart, you'll have time enough to toy after you're married; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the meantime, that we who are not lovers may have some other employment besides looking on.

MIRABELL. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull. What shall we do for music?

FOIBLE. Oh, sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call. (*A dance*)

LADY WISHFORT. As I am a person, I can hold out no longer. I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue, and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

MIRABELL. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge his circumstances are such he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a reunion; in the meantime, madam—(*To* MRS. FAINALL) let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust. It may be a means, well-managed, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warned who mean to wed,
Lest mutual falsehood stain the bridal bed;
For each deceiver to his cost may find
That marriage-frauds too oft are paid in kind. *Exeunt Omnes*

EPILOGUE

After our Epilogue this crowd dismisses,
I'm thinking how this play'll be pulled to pieces.
But pray consider, ere you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 'twould be to please you all.
There are some critics so with spleen diseased,
They scarcely come inclining to be pleased:
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
Who pleases anyone against his will.
Then, all bad poets we are sure are foes,
And how their number's swelled, the town well knows:
In shoals I've marked 'em judging in the pit;
Though they're on no pretence for judgment fit,
But that they have been damned for want of wit.
Since when, they by their own offences taught,
Set up for spies on plays and finding fault.
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent;
Such who watch plays with scurrilous intent
To mark out who by characters are meant.
And though no perfect likeness they can trace,
Yet each pretends to know the copied face.
These with false glosses feed their own ill nature,
And turn to libel what was meant a satire.
May such malicious fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the fools designed—
If any are so arrogantly vain,
To think they singly can support a scene,
And furnish fool enough to entertain.
For well the learn'd and the judicious know
That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low
As any one abstracted fop to show.
For, as when painters form a matchless face,
They from each fair one catch some different grace,
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single beauty must pretend;
So poets oft do in one piece expose
Whole *belles-assemblées* of coquettes and beaux.

THE BEAUX STRATAGEM

A Comedy by George Farquhar

ADVERTISEMENT.—The reader may find some faults in this play which my illness prevented the amending of; but there is great amends made in the representation, which cannot be matched, no more than the friendly and indefatigable care of Mr. Wilks, to whom I chiefly owe the success of the play.—George Farquhar

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Aimwell, Archer } two gentlemen of broken fortunes, the first as master, and the second as servant
Count Bellair, a French officer, prisoner at Litchfield
Sullen, a country blockhead, brutal to his wife
Freeman, a gentleman from London
Foigard, a priest, chaplain to the French officers
Gibbet, a highwayman
Hounslow, Bagshot } his companions
Bonniface, landlord of the inn
Scrub, servant to Mr. Sullen

Lady Bountiful } an old, civil country gentlewoman that cures all her neighbors of all distempers, and foolishly fond of her son Sullen
Dorinda, Lady Bountiful's daughter
Mrs. Sullen, her daughter-in-law
Gipsey, maid to the ladies
Cherry, the landlord's daughter in the inn
[A country woman]

Scene: *Litchfield*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

PROLOGUE

When strife disturbs, or sloth corrupts an age,
Keen satire is the business of the stage.
When the *Plain Dealer*[1] writ, he lashed those crimes
Which then infested most—the modish times:
But now, when faction sleeps and sloth is fled,
And all our youth in active fields are bred;
When thro' Great Britain's fair extensive round,
The trumps of fame the notes of Union sound;
When Anna's scepter points the laws their course,
And her example gives her precepts force:
There scarce is room for satire; all our lays
Must be or songs of triumph or of praise.
But as in grounds best cultivated, tares
And poppies rise among the golden ears;
Our products so, fit for the field or school,
Must mix with nature's favorite plant—a fool:
A weed that has to twenty summers ran,
Shoots up in stalk, and vegetates to man.
Simpling our author goes from field to field,
And culls such fools as may diversion yield;
And, thanks to Nature, there's no want of those,
For, rain or shine, the thriving coxcomb grows.
Follies to-night we show ne'er lashed before,
Yet such as nature shows you every hour;
Nor can the pictures give a just offence,
For fools are made for jests to men of sense.

[1] Wycherley.

ACT I

SCENE I. *An Inn*

Enter BONNIFACE *running*

BONNIFACE. Chamberlain! Maid! Cherry! Daughter Cherry! All asleep? all dead?

Enter CHERRY *running*

CHERRY. Here, here! Why d'ye bawl so, father? D'ye think we have no ears?

BONNIFACE. You deserve to have none, you young minx! The company of the Warrington coach[1] has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to show them to their chambers.

CHERRY. And let 'em wait farther; there's neither red-coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

BONNIFACE. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night.

CHERRY. That they dare not, for fear the coachman should overturn them to-morrow. —Coming! coming!—Here's the London coach arrived.

Enter several people with trunks, bandboxes, and other luggage, and cross the stage

BONNIFACE. Welcome, ladies!

CHERRY. Very welcome, gentlemen!—Chamberlain, show the *Lion* and the *Rose*.[2] *Exit with the company*

Enter AIMWELL *in riding habit*, ARCHER *as footman carrying a portmantle*[3]

BONNIFACE. This way, this way, gentlemen!

AIMWELL. Set down the things; go to the stable and see my horses well rubbed.

ARCHER. I shall, sir. *Exit*

AIMWELL. You're my landlord, I suppose?

BONNIFACE. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Bonniface—pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

AIMWELL. O! Mr. Bonniface, your servant.

BONNIFACE. O sir—What will your honor please to drink, as the saying is?

AIMWELL. I have heard your town of Litchfield much famed for ale; I think I'll taste that.

BONNIFACE. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy; and will be just fourteen year old the fifth day of next March, old style.

AIMWELL. You're very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

BONNIFACE. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children. I'll show you such ale!—here, tapster, broach number 1706, as the saying is.—Sir, you shall taste my *Anno Domini*.—I have lived in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight and fifty years, and, I believe, have not consumed eight and fifty ounces of meat.

AIMWELL. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

BONNIFACE. Not in my life, sir. I have fed purely upon ale; I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter Tapster *with a bottle and glass*

Now, sir, you shall see!—(*Filling it out*) Your worship's health.—Ha! delicious, delicious—fancy it burgundy, only fancy it! and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

AIMWELL. (*Drinks*) 'Tis confounded strong!

BONNIFACE. Strong! It must be so, or how should we be strong that drink it?

AIMWELL. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

BONNIFACE. Eight and fifty years, upon my credit, sir—but it killed my wife, poor woman, as the saying is.

AIMWELL. How came that to pass?

BONNIFACE. I don't know how, sir; she would not let the ale take its natural course, sir; she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is; and an

1 In Lancashire, and so from a country district.
2 Chambers named from their hangings.
3 portmanteau.

honest gentleman that came this way from Ireland made her a present of a dozen bottles of usquebaugh[1]—but the poor woman was never well after: but, howe'er, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

AIMWELL. Why, was it the usquebaugh that killed her?

BONNIFACE. My Lady Bountiful said so. She, good lady, did what could be done; she cured her of three tympanies,[2] but the fourth carried her off. But she's happy, and I'm contented, as the saying is.

AIMWELL. Who's that Lady Bountiful you mentioned?

BONNIFACE. Ods my life, sir, we'll drink her health. (*Drinks*) My Lady Bountiful is one of the best of women. Her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pound a year; and, I believe, she lays out one half on't in charitable uses for the good of her neighbors. She cures rheumatisms, ruptures, and broken shins in men; green-sickness, obstructions, and fits of the mother[3] in women; the kings-evil,[4] chincough, and chilblains in children: in short, she has cured more people in and about Litchfield within ten years than the doctors have killed in twenty; and that's a bold word.

AIMWELL. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

BONNIFACE. Yes, sir; she has a daughter by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our country, and the greatest fortune. She has a son too, by her first husband, Squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London t'other day; if you please, sir, we'll drink his health.

AIMWELL. What sort of a man is he?

BONNIFACE. Why, sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing at all, faith. But he's a man of great estate, and values nobody.

AIMWELL. A sportsman, I suppose?

BONNIFACE. Yes, sir, he's a man of pleasure; he plays at whisk[5] and smokes his pipe eight and forty hours together sometimes.

AIMWELL. And married, you say?

BONNIFACE. Aye, and to a curious woman, sir. But he's a—he wants it here, sir. (*Pointing to his forehead*)

AIMWELL. He has it there, you mean?

BONNIFACE. That's none of my business; he's my landlord, and so a man, you know, would not—But—I cod, he's no better than—Sir, my humble service to you.—(*Drinks*) Tho' I value not a farthing what he can do to me, I pay him his rent at quarter day; I have a good running trade. I have but one daughter, and I can give her—but no matter for that.

AIMWELL. You're very happy, Mr. Boniface. Pray, what other company have you in town?

BONNIFACE. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French officers.

AIMWELL. Oh, that's right, you have a good many of those gentlemen. Pray, how do you like their company?

BONNIFACE. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of 'em; they're full of money and pay double for everything they have. They know, sir, that we paid good round taxes for the taking of 'em, and so they are willing to reimburse us a little. One of 'em lodges in my house.

Enter ARCHER

ARCHER. Landlord, there are some French gentlemen below that ask for you.

BONNIFACE. I'll wait on 'em.—(*To* ARCHER) Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is?

ARCHER. I can't tell, as the saying is.

BONNIFACE. Come from London?

ARCHER. No.

BONNIFACE. Going to London, may hap?

ARCHER. No.

BONNIFACE. An odd fellow this.—I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute. *Exit*

AIMWELL. The coast's clear, I see.—Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Litchfield.

ARCHER. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

1 A strong cordial.
2 Attacks of wind dropsy.
3 hysterics.
4 scrofula.
5 whist.

AIMWELL. Iniquity! prithee, leave canting; you need not change your style with your dress.

ARCHER. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim that there is no scandal like rags nor any crime so shameful as poverty.

AIMWELL. The world confesses it every day in its practice, tho' men won't own it for their opinion. Who did that worthy lord, my brother, single out of the side-box to sup with him t'other night?

ARCHER. Jack Handycraft, a handsome, well dressed, mannerly, sharping rogue, who keeps the best company in town.

AIMWELL. Right. And pray, who married my lady Manslaughter t'other day, the great fortune?

ARCHER. Why, Nick Marrabone, a professed pickpocket and a good bowler; but he makes a handsome figure and rides in his coach, that he formerly used to ride behind.

AIMWELL. But did you observe poor Jack Generous in the park last week?

ARCHER. Yes, with his autumnal periwig shading his melancholy face, his coat older than anything but its fashion, with one hand idle in his pocket, and with the other picking his useless teeth; and tho' the Mall was crowded with company, yet was poor Jack as single and solitary as a lion in a desert.

AIMWELL. And as much avoided, for no crime upon earth but the want of money.

ARCHER. And that's enough. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough—let 'em bustle. Fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

AIMWELL. Upon which topic we proceed, and, I think, luckily hitherto. Would not any man swear, now, that I am a man of quality, and you my servant, when if our intrinsic value were known—

ARCHER. Come, come, we are the men of intrinsic value who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accidents in life or revolutions in government: we have heads to get money and hearts to spend it.

AIMWELL. As to our hearts, I grant ye they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees: but I can have no great opinion of our heads from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they have brought us from London hither to Litchfield, made me a lord, and you my servant.

ARCHER. That's more than you could expect already. But what money have we left?

AIMWELL. But two hundred pound.

ARCHER. And our horses, clothes, rings, etc.—Why, we have very good fortunes now for moderate people; and, let me tell you besides, that this two hundred pound, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten we have spent.—Our friends, indeed, began to suspect that our pockets were low, but we came off with flying colors—showed no signs of want either in word or deed.

AIMWELL. Aye, and our going to Brussels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disappearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine that we are gone a volunteering.

ARCHER. Why, faith, if this prospect fails, it must e'en come to that. I am for venturing one of the hundreds, if you will, upon this knight-errantry; but in case it should fail, we'll reserve the t'other to carry us to some counterscarp,[1] where we may die, as we lived, in a blaze.

AIMWELL. With all my heart; and we have lived justly, Archer: we can't say that we have spent our fortunes but that we have enjoyed 'em.

ARCHER. Right: so much pleasure for so much money. We have had our pennyworths; and, had I millions, I would go to the same market again.—O London, London! —Well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful. Past pleasures, for aught I know, are best, such as we are sure of: those to come may disappoint us.

AIMWELL. It has often grieved the heart of me to see how some inhuman wretches

[1] Outer wall of a ditch protecting a fort.

murther their kind fortunes—those that, by sacrificing all to one appetite, shall starve all the rest. You shall have some that live only in their palates, and in their sense of tasting shall drown the other four: others are only epicures in appearances, such who shall starve their nights to make a figure a-days, and famish their own to feed the eyes of others: a contrary sort confine their pleasures to the dark, and contract their spacious acres to the circuit of a muff-string.

ARCHER. Right! But they find the Indies in that spot where they consume 'em, and I think your kind keepers have much the best on't: for they indulge the most senses by one expense; there's the seeing, hearing, and feeling, amply gratified. And some philosophers will tell you that from such a commerce there arises a sixth sense, that gives infinitely more pleasure than the other five put together.

AIMWELL. And to pass to the other extremity, of all keepers I think those the worst that keep their money.

ARCHER. Those are the most miserable wights in being; they destroy the rights of nature and disappoint the blessings of Providence. Give me a man that keeps his five senses keen and bright as his sword, that has 'em always drawn out in their just order and strength, with his reason as commander at the head of 'em; that detaches 'em by turns upon whatever party of pleasure agreeably offers, and commands 'em to retreat upon the least appearance of disadvantage or danger. For my part, I can stick to my bottle while my wine, my company, and my reason, holds good; I can be charmed with Sappho's singing without falling in love with her face; I love hunting, but would not, like Acteon, be eaten up by my own dogs; I love a fine house, but let another keep it: and just so I love a fine woman.

AIMWELL. In that last particular you have the better of me.

ARCHER. Aye, you're such an amorous puppy that I'm afraid you'll spoil our sport; you can't counterfeit the passion without feeling it.

AIMWELL. Tho' the whining part be out of doors[1] in town, 'tis still in force with the country ladies.—And let me tell you, Frank, the fool in that passion shall outdo the knave at any time.

ARCHER. Well, I won't dispute it now; you command for the day, and so I submit. —At Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

AIMWELL. And at Lincoln, I again.

ARCHER. Then, at Norwich I mount, which, I think, shall be our last stage; for, if we fail there, we'll embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

AIMWELL. A match!—

Enter BONNIFACE

Mum!

BONNIFACE. What will your worship please to have for supper?

AIMWELL. What have you got?

BONNIFACE. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

AIMWELL. Good supper-meat, I must confess.—I can't eat beef, landlord.

ARCHER. And I hate pig.

AIMWELL. Hold your prating, sirrah! Do you know who you are?

BONNIFACE. Please to bespeak something else; I have everything in the house.

AIMWELL. Have you any veal?

BONNIFACE. Veal! Sir, we had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

AIMWELL. Have you got any fish or wildfowl?

BONNIFACE. As for fish, truly, sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish—that's the truth on't; and then for wildfowl—we have a delicate couple of rabbits.

AIMWELL. Get me the rabbits fricasy'd.

BONNIFACE. Fricasy'd! Lard, sir, they'll eat much better smothered with onions.

ARCHER. Pshaw! Damn your onions!

AIMWELL. Again, sirrah!—Well, landlord, what you please. But hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers that I believe it may be

[1] out of fashion.

safer in your custody than mine; for when this fellow of mine gets drunk he minds nothing.—Here, sirrah, reach me the strong box.

ARCHER. Yes, sir.—(*Aside*) This will give us a reputation. (*Brings the box*) 364

AIMWELL. Here, landlord. The locks are sealed down both for your security and mine. It holds somewhat above two hundred pound: if you doubt it, I'll count it to you after supper. But be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning, for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may be gone in half an hour, perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent: and pray order your ostler to keep my horses always saddled. But one thing above the rest I must beg, that you would let this fellow have none of your *Anno Domini*, as you call it; for he's the most insufferable sot.—Here, sirrah, light me to my chamber. 380

Exit, lighted by ARCHER

BONNIFACE. Cherry! Daughter Cherry!

Enter CHERRY

CHERRY. D'ye call, father?

BONNIFACE. Aye, child, you must lay by this box for the gentleman; 'tis full of money. 385

CHERRY. Money! all that money? Why, sure, father, the gentleman comes to be chosen parliament-man. Who is he?

BONNIFACE. I don't know what to make of him; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going perhaps at a minute's warning, or of staying perhaps till the best part of this be spent. 393

CHERRY. Aye, ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

BONNIFACE. A highwayman! Upon my life, girl, you have hit it, and this box is some new-purchased booty. Now, could we find him out, the money were ours. 399

CHERRY. He don't belong to our gang.

BONNIFACE. What horses have they?

CHERRY. The master rides upon a black.

BONNIFACE. A black! ten to one the man upon the black mare; and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience. I don't think it lawful to harbor any rogues but my own.—Look ye, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work; proofs we must have. The gentleman's servant loves drink; I'll ply him that way: and ten to one loves a wench; you must work him t'other way. 412

CHERRY. Father, would you have me give my secret for his?

BONNIFACE. Consider, child, there's two hundred pound to boot.—(*Ringing without*) Coming! coming!—Child, mind your business. *Exit* 418

CHERRY. What a rogue is my father! My father? I deny it. My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her good nature might have extended for the good of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest and debauch his daughter into the bargain —by a footman too! 427

Enter ARCHER

ARCHER. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

CHERRY. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for't. 432

ARCHER. I hope so, for I'm sure you did not think of me.

CHERRY. Suppose I had?

ARCHER. Why, then you're but even with me; for the minute I came in, I was a-considering in what manner I should make love to you. 439

CHERRY. Love to me, friend!

ARCHER. Yes, child.

CHERRY. Child! manners!—If you kept a little more distance, friend, it would become you much better.

ARCHER. Distance! Good night, sauce-box. (*Going*) 446

CHERRY. A pretty fellow! I like his pride. —Sir, pray, sir, you see, sir, (ARCHER *returns*) I have the credit to be entrusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman; I hope, sir, you an't affronted? 452

ARCHER. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or no.—'Sdeath, child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with 'em!

CHERRY. Why, sir, don't I see everybody?

ARCHER. Aye, but if some women had 'em, they would kill everybody. Prithee, instruct me; I would fain make love to you, but I don't know what to say.

CHERRY. Why, did you never make love to anybody before?

ARCHER. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, madam. My addresses have been always confined to people within my own sphere; I never aspired so high before. (*A song*[1])

But you look so bright,
And are dressed so tight,
[That a man would swear you're right,
As arm was e'er laid over.
Such an air
You freely wear
To ensnare,
As makes each guest a lover!
Since then, my dear, I'm your guest,
Prithee give me of the best
Of what is ready drest:
Since then, my dear, etc.]

CHERRY. (*Aside*) What can I think of this man?—Will you give me that song, sir?

ARCHER. Aye, my dear; take it while 'tis warm. (*Kisses her*) Death and fire! her lips are honeycombs.

CHERRY. And I wish there had been bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

ARCHER. There's a swarm of Cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

CHERRY. (*Aside*) This fellow is misbegotten as well as I.—What's your name, sir?

ARCHER. (*Aside*) Name! I gad, I have forgot it.—Oh! Martin.

CHERRY. Where were you born?

ARCHER. In St. Martin's parish.

CHERRY. What was your father?

ARCHER. St. Martin's parish.

CHERRY. Then, friend, good night.

ARCHER. I hope not.

CHERRY. You may depend upon't.

ARCHER. Upon what?

CHERRY. That you're very impudent.

ARCHER. That you're very handsome.

CHERRY. That you're a footman.

ARCHER. That you're an angel.

CHERRY. I shall be rude.

ARCHER. So shall I.

CHERRY. Let go my hand.

ARCHER. Give me a kiss. (*Kisses her*) (*Call without*) Cherry! Cherry!

CHERRY. I'mm—My father calls. You plaguy devil, how durst you stop my breath so?—Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. *Exit*

ARCHER. A fair challenge, by this light! This is a pretty fair opening of an adventure; but we are knight-errants, and so Fortune be our guide. *Exit*

ACT II

SCENE [I]. *A Gallery in Lady Bountiful's house*

[*Enter*] MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA, *meeting*

DORINDA. Morrow, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?

MRS. SULLEN. Anywhere to pray, for Heaven alone can help me. But I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the liturgy against bad husbands.

DORINDA. But there's a form of law in Doctors-Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that. For besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband and friend to the wife, your example gives me such an impression of matrimony that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life. But supposing, madam, that you brought it to a case of separation, what can you urge against

[1] First given in full in 1721 edition.

your husband? My brother is, first, the most constant man alive.

MRS. SULLEN. The most constant husband, I grant ye.

DORINDA. He never sleeps from you.

MRS. SULLEN. No, he always sleeps with me.

DORINDA. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.

MRS. SULLEN. A maintenance! Do you take me, madam, for an hospital child, that I must sit down and bless my benefactors for meat, drink, and clothes? As I take it, madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things called "pleasures."

DORINDA. You share in all the pleasures that the country affords.

MRS. SULLEN. Country-pleasures! Racks and torments! Dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clamb'ring over stiles? or that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country-pleasures, had early instructed me in the rural accomplishments of drinking fat ale, playing at whisk, and smoking tobacco with my husband? or of spreading of plasters, brewing of diet-drinks, and stilling rosemary-water, with the good old gentlewoman my mother-in-law?

DORINDA. I'm sorry, madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined. But pray, madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that labored so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it at last in a country life?

MRS. SULLEN. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town. Did you ever see a poet or philosopher worth ten thousand pound? If you can show me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pound you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills.[1] Not that I disapprove rural pleasures as the poets have painted them; in their landscape, every Phyllis has her Coridon, every murmuring stream and every flow'ry mead gives fresh alarms to love. Besides, you'll find that their couples were never married.—But yonder I see my Coridon, and a sweet swain it is, Heaven knows! Come, Dorinda, don't be angry; he's my husband, and your brother: and, between both, is he not a sad brute?

DORINDA. I have nothing to say to your part of him; you're the best judge.

MRS. SULLEN. O sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot, one that 's always musing, but never thinks. There 's some diversion in a talking blockhead; and since a woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing 'em rattle a little. Now you shall see; but take this by the way:—He came home this morning at his usual hour of four, wakened me out of a sweet dream of something else by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces; after his man and he had rolled about the room like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket—his feet cold as ice, his breath hot as a furnace, and his hands and his face as greasy as his flannel night-cap.—Oh, matrimony! He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, leaves me half naked, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneable serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose! Oh, the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband!—But now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter SULLEN

SULLEN. My head aches consumedly.

MRS. SULLEN. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning? It may do your head good.

SULLEN. No.

DORINDA. Coffee, brother?

SULLEN. Pshaw!

MRS. SULLEN. Will you please to dress and go to church with me? The air may help you.

SULLEN. [*Calls*] Scrub!

[1] Lists of births and deaths in London.

Enter SCRUB

SCRUB. Sir.

SULLEN. What day o'th' week is this?

SCRUB. Sunday, an't please your worship.

SULLEN. Sunday! bring me a dram; and d'ye hear, set out the venison-pasty and a tankard of strong beer upon the hall-table. I'll go to breakfast. (*Going*)

DORINDA. Stay, stay, brother, you shan't get off so; you were very naught last night, and must make your wife reparation. Come, come, brother, won't you ask pardon?

SULLEN. For what?

DORINDA. For being drunk last night.

SULLEN. I can afford it, can't I?

MRS. SULLEN. But I can't, sir.

SULLEN. Then you may let it alone.

MRS. SULLEN. But I must tell you, sir, that this is not to be borne.

SULLEN. I'm glad on't.

MRS. SULLEN. What is the reason, sir, that you use me thus inhumanely?

SULLEN. Scrub!

SCRUB. Sir?

SULLEN. Get things ready to shave my head. [*Exit* SULLEN]

MRS. SULLEN. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor.—

Exit SCRUB

Inveterate stupidity! Did you ever know so hard, so obstinate a spleen as his? O sister, sister! I shall never ha' good of the beast till I get him to town. London, dear London, is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

DORINDA. And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?

MRS. SULLEN. No, no, child, 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline that when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town. A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel. O Dorinda, Dorinda! a fine woman may do anything in London: o' my conscience, she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

DORINDA. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Litchfield; you have drawn the French count to your colors already.

MRS. SULLEN. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

DORINDA. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

MRS. SULLEN. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish husband, is to give him a rival. Security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make 'em alert in their duty. Women are, like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

DORINDA. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you, but I fancy there's a natural aversion of his side; and I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

MRS. SULLEN. I own it; we are united contradictions—fire and water. But I could be contented, with a great many other wives, to humor the censorious mob and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him but to dissemble a little kindness to keep me in countenance.

DORINDA. But how do you know, sister, but that instead of rousing your husband by this artifice to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

MRS. SULLEN. Let him: if I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

DORINDA. But how must I behave myself between ye?

MRS. SULLEN. You must assist me.

DORINDA. What, against my own brother!

MRS. SULLEN. He's but half a brother, and I'm your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honor, leave me; till then, I expect you should go along with me

in everything. While I trust my honor in your hands, you may trust your brother's in mine.—The count is to dine here to-day.

DORINDA. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

MRS. SULLEN. You like nothing; your time is not come. Love and death have their fatalities, and strike home one time or other; you'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye.—But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church-time. *Exeunt*

SCENE [II]. *The Inn*

Enter AIMWELL, *dressed, and* ARCHER

AIMWELL. And was she the daughter of the house?

ARCHER. The landlord is so blind as to think so, but I dare swear she has better blood in her veins.

AIMWELL. Why dost think so?

ARCHER. Because the baggage has a pert *je ne sais quoi*;[1] she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapors.

AIMWELL. By which discoveries I guess that you know more of her.

ARCHER. Not yet, faith. The lady gives herself airs: "Forsooth, nothing under a gentleman!"

AIMWELL. Let me take her in hand.

ARCHER. Say one word more o' that, and I'll declare myself, spoil your sport there and everywhere else. Look ye, Aimwell, every man in his own sphere.

AIMWELL. Right; and therefore you must pimp for your master.

ARCHER. In the usual forms, good sir, after I have served myself.—But to our business. You are so well dressed, Tom, and make so handsome a figure, that I fancy you may do execution in a country church; the exterior part strikes first, and you're in the right to make that impression favorable.

AIMWELL. There's something in that which may turn to advantage. The appearance of a stranger in a country church draws as many gazers as a blazing star; no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers runs buzzing round the congregation in a moment:—Who is he? Whence comes he? Do you know him?—Then I, sir, tips me the verger with half a crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church. I pull out my snuff-box, turn myself round, bow to the bishop, or the dean, if he be the commanding officer; single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes to hers, set my nose a-bleeding by the strength of imagination, and show the whole church my concern by my endeavoring to hide it. After the sermon, the whole town gives me to her for a lover, and by persuading the lady that I am a-dying for her, the tables are turned, and she in good earnest falls in love with me.

ARCHER. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent. But instead of riveting your eyes to a beauty, try to fix 'em upon a fortune; that's our business at present.

AIMWELL. Pshaw! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune. Let me alone, for I am a marksman.

ARCHER. Tom!

AIMWELL. Aye.

ARCHER. When were you at church before, pray?

AIMWELL. Um—I was there at the coronation.[2]

ARCHER. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

AIMWELL. Blessing! nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife. *Exit*

ARCHER. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands.

Exit at the opposite door

Enter BONNIFACE *and* CHERRY

BONNIFACE. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

CHERRY. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting anything out of a man; I'm but young, you know, father, and I don't understand wheedling.

[1] I know not what.

[2] April 23, 1702.

BONNIFACE. Young! why, you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young? Your mother was useless at five and twenty. Not wheedle! would you make your mother a whore, and me a cuckold, as the saying is? I tell you, his silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter GIBBET, *in a cloak*

GIBBET. Landlord, landlord, is the coast clear?

BONNIFACE. O Mr. Gibbet, what's the news?

GIBBET. No matter, ask no questions; all fair and honorable.—Here, my dear Cherry. —(*Gives her a bag*) Two hundred sterling pounds, as good as any that ever hanged or saved a rogue; lay 'em by with the rest; and here—three wedding or mourning rings—'tis much the same, you know.—Here, two silver-hilted swords; I took those from fellows that never show any part of their swords but the hilts. Here is a diamond necklace which the lady hid in the privatest place in the coach, but I found it out.—This gold watch I took from a pawn-broker's wife. It was left in her hands by a person of quality—there's the arms upon the case.

CHERRY. But who had you the money from?

GIBBET. Ah! poor woman! I pitied her; —from a poor lady just eloped from her husband. She had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland as hard as she could drive; she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so I left her half a crown. But I had almost forgot, my dear Cherry; I have a present for you.

CHERRY. What is't?

GIBBET. A pot of cereuse,[1] my child, that I took out of a lady's under pocket.

CHERRY. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think that I paint?

GIBBET. Why, you jade, your betters do; I'm sure the lady that I took it from had a coronet upon her handkerchief.—Here, take my cloak, and go secure the premises.

CHERRY. I will secure 'em. *Exit*

BONNIFACE. But hark ye, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

GIBBET. They'll be here to-night.

BONNIFACE. D'ye know of any other gentlemen o' the pad on this road?

GIBBET. No.

BONNIFACE. I fancy that I have two that lodge in the house just now.

GIBBET. The devil! How d'ye smoke 'em?

BONNIFACE. Why, the one is gone to church.

GIBBET. That's suspicious, I must confess.

BONNIFACE. And the other is now in his master's chamber; he pretends to be servant to the other. We'll call him out and pump him a little.

GIBBET. With all my heart.

BONNIFACE. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin!

Enter [ARCHER] *combing a periwig and singing*

GIBBET. The roads are consumed deep; I'm as dirty as old Brentford at Christmas.—A good pretty fellow that. Whose servant are you, friend?

ARCHER. My master's.

GIBBET. Really!

ARCHER. Really.

GIBBET. That's much.—The fellow has been at the bar, by his evasions.—But pray, sir, what is your master's name?

ARCHER. *Tall, all, dall!*—(*Sings and combs the periwig*) This is the most obstinate curl—

GIBBET. I ask you his name.

ARCHER. Name, sir—*tall, all, dall!*—I never asked him his name in my life.—*Tall, all, dall!*

BONNIFACE. What think you now?

GIBBET. Plain, plain; he talks now as if he were before a judge.—But pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

ARCHER. A-horseback.

[1] cosmetic.

GIBBET. Very well again; an old offender, right.—But, I mean, does he go upwards or downwards?

ARCHER. Downwards, I fear, sir.—*Tall, all!*

GIBBET. I'm afraid my fate will be a contrary way.[1]

BONNIFACE. Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Martin, you're very arch. This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all.—Come, Captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose? I'll show you a chamber.—Come, Captain.

[*Exit* BONNIFACE]

GIBBET. Farewell, friend! *Exit*

ARCHER. Captain, your servant.—Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath, I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Enter CHERRY

CHERRY. (*Aside*) Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen; I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me.—Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

ARCHER. Some recruiting sergeant or whipped-out trooper, I suppose.

CHERRY. (*Aside*) All's safe, I find.

ARCHER. Come, my dear, have you conned over the catechise I taught you last night?

CHERRY. Come, question me.

ARCHER. What is love?

CHERRY. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, and goes I know not when.

ARCHER. Very well, an apt scholar.—(*Chucks her under the chin*) Where does love enter?

CHERRY. Into the eyes.

ARCHER. And where go out?

CHERRY. I won't tell ye.

ARCHER. What are objects of that passion?

CHERRY. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

ARCHER. The reason?

CHERRY. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

ARCHER. That's my dear.—What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

CHERRY. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

ARCHER. That's my good child! Kiss me.—What must a lover do to obtain his mistress?

CHERRY. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him. He must—he must—

ARCHER. Nay, child, I must whip you if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his—

CHERRY. O, aye!—He must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt; he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much, and hope little; in short, he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

ARCHER. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine!—Come, my dear, why is love called a riddle?

CHERRY. Because, being blind, he leads those that see, and, tho' a child, he governs a man.

ARCHER. Mighty well!—And why is Love pictured blind?

CHERRY. Because the painters, out of the weakness or privilege of their art, chose to hide those eyes that they could not draw.

ARCHER. That's my dear little scholar; kiss me again.—And why should Love, that's a child, govern a man?

CHERRY. Because that a child is the end of love.

ARCHER. And so ends Love's catechism.—And now, my dear, we'll go in and make my master's bed.

CHERRY. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin! You have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learnt by it?

ARCHER. What?

CHERRY. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

[1] up the gallows.

ARCHER. Oons, what a witch it is!

CHERRY. Depend upon this, sir: nothing in this garb shall ever tempt me; for, tho' I was born to servitude, I hate it. Own your condition, swear you love me, and then—

ARCHER. And then we shall go make the bed?

CHERRY. Yes.

ARCHER. You must know, then, that I am born a gentleman. My education was liberal, but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stripped me of my money; my friends disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

CHERRY. Then take my hand—promise to marry me before you sleep, and I'll make you master of two thousand pound!

ARCHER. How?

CHERRY. Two thousand pound that I have this minute in my own custody; so throw off your livery this instant, and I'll go find a parson.

ARCHER. What said you? A parson!

CHERRY. What! do you scruple?

ARCHER. Scruple! no, no, but—Two thousand pound, you say?

CHERRY. And better.

ARCHER. 'Sdeath, what shall I do?—But hark'e, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me and still keep your fortune in your hands?

CHERRY. Then you won't marry me?

ARCHER. I would marry you, but—

CHERRY. O sweet sir, I'm your humble servant: you're fairly caught! Would you persuade me that any gentleman who could bear the scandal of wearing a livery, would refuse two thousand pound, let the condition be what it would? No, no, sir.—But I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect that I ought to pay you. (*Going*)

ARCHER. Fairly bit, by Jupiter!—Hold! hold!—And have you actually two thousand pound?

CHERRY. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you. When you please to be more open I shall be more free; and be assured that I have discoveries that will match yours, be what they will. In the meanwhile, be satisfied that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you. But beware of my father! [*Exit*]

ARCHER. So! we're like to have as many adventures in our inn as Don Quixote had in his. Let me see—two thousand pound—if the wench would promise to die when the money were spent, I gad, one would marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live—Lord knows how long! Then, an innkeeper's daughter! aye, that's the devil—there my pride brings me off.

For whatso'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels fall, and twenty faults beside,
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft, and woman too, from falling. *Exit*

ACT III

SCENE [I. LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *house*]

Enter MRS. SULLEN [*and*] DORINDA

MRS. SULLEN. Ha! ha! ha! my dear sister, let me embrace thee! Now we are friends indeed, for I shall have a secret of yours as a pledge for mine. Now you'll be good for something; I shall have you conversable in the subjects of the sex.

DORINDA. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight?

MRS. SULLEN. Pshaw! now you spoil all; why should not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confidant already, has avowed his passion, toasted your health, called you ten thousand angels, has run over your lips, eyes, neck, shape, air, and everything, in a description that warms their mirth to a second enjoyment.

DORINDA. Your hand, sister; I an't well.

MRS. SULLEN. So—she's breeding already.—Come, child, up with it—hem a little—

so—now tell me: don't you like the gentleman that we saw at church just now?

DORINDA. The man's well enough.

MRS. SULLEN. Well enough! Is he not a demigod, a Narcissus, a star, the man i'the moon?

DORINDA. O sister, I'm extremely ill!

MRS. SULLEN. Shall I send to your mother, child, for a little of her cephalic plaster to put to the soles of your feet, or shall I send to the gentleman for something for you? Come, unlace your stays; unbosom yourself. The man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

DORINDA. I saw him too, sister, and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

MRS. SULLEN. Well said: up with it!

DORINDA. No forward coquette behavior, no airs to set him off, no studied looks nor artful posture—but Nature did it all—

MRS. SULLEN. Better and better!—One touch more—come!

DORINDA. But then his looks—did you observe his eyes?

MRS. SULLEN. Yes, yes, I did.—His eyes, well, what of his eyes?

DORINDA. Sprightly, but not wand'ring; they seemed to view, but never gazed on anything but me.—And then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me that he could with pride die at my feet, tho' he scorned slavery anywhere else.

MRS. SULLEN. The physic works purely!—How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

DORINDA. Hem! Much better, my dear.—Oh, here comes our Mercury!

Enter SCRUB

Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

SCRUB. Madam, I have brought you a packet of news.

DORINDA. Open it quickly, come.

SCRUB. In the first place I enquired who the gentleman was; they told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was; they answered and said that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I enquired what countryman he was; they replied 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came; their answer was, they could not tell. And, fifthly, I asked whither he went; and they replied they knew nothing of the matter—and this is all I could learn.

MRS. SULLEN. But what do the people say? Can't they guess?

SCRUB. Why, some think he's a spy, some guess he's a mountebank; some say one thing some another: but for my own part, I believe he's a Jesuit.

DORINDA. A Jesuit! Why a Jesuit?

SCRUB. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French.

MRS. SULLEN. His footman!

SCRUB. Aye, he and the count's footman were jabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.

DORINDA. What sort of livery has the footman?

SCRUB. Livery! Lord, madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizened with lace. And then he has tops to his shoes up to his mid leg, a silver-headed cane dangling at his knuckles; he carries his hands in his pockets just so—(*Walks in the French air*)—and has a fine long periwig tied up in a bag.—Lord, madam, he's clear another sort of man than I.

MRS. SULLEN. That may easily be.—But what shall we do now, sister?

DORINDA. I have it.—This fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning; the first hides the latter by abundance.—Scrub!

SCRUB. Madam!

DORINDA. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

SCRUB. Yes, madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

DORINDA. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale—because you're butler to-day.

SCRUB. Yes, madam, I am butler every Sunday.

MRS. SULLEN. O brave, sister! O' my conscience, you understand the mathematics

already. 'Tis the best plot in the world: your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the ale-house with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own—so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know, any stranger is company, and we're glad to take up with the butler in a country dance, and happy if he'll do us the favor.

SCRUB. Oh! madam, you wrong me! I never refused your ladyship the favor in my life.

Enter GIPSEY

GIPSEY. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

DORINDA. Scrub, we'll excuse your waiting—go where we ordered you.

SCRUB. I shall. *Exeunt*

SCENE [II]. *The Inn*

Enter AIMWELL *and* ARCHER

ARCHER. Well, Tom, I find you're a marksman.

AIMWELL. A marksman! who so blind could be, as not discern a swan among the ravens?

ARCHER. Well, but hark'ee, Aimwell!

AIMWELL. Aimwell! call me Oroondates,[1] Cesario,[2] Amadis[3]—all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. O Archer! I read her thousands in her looks; she looked like Ceres in her harvest: corn, wine, and oil, milk and honey, gardens, groves, and purling streams played on her plenteous face.

ARCHER. Her face! her pocket, you mean; the corn, wine, and oil lies there. In short, she has ten thousand pound; that's the English on't.

AIMWELL. Her eyes—

ARCHER. Are demi-cannons, to be sure; so I won't stand their battery. (*Going*)

AIMWELL. Pray, excuse me; my passion must have vent.

ARCHER. Passion! what a plague! D'ee think these romantic airs will do our business? Were my temper as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

AIMWELL. Your adventures!

ARCHER. Yes. The nymph that with her twice ten hundred pounds,
With brazen engine hot, and quoif[4] clear starched,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed—
There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject but an innkeeper's daughter! I can play with a girl as an angler does with his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream and down the stream, till at last he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter BONNIFACE

BONNIFACE. Mr. Martin, as the saying is—yonder's an honest fellow below, my Lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honor that you would go home with him and see his cellar.

ARCHER. Do my *baisemains*[5] to the gentleman, and tell him I will do myself the honor to wait on him immediately.

Exit BONNIFACE

AIMWELL. What do I hear? Soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing!

ARCHER. Pshaw! damn your raptures! I tell you, here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the ship will get into harbor, my life on't. You say there's another lady, very handsome, there?

AIMWELL. Yes, faith.

ARCHER. I am in love with her already.

AIMWELL. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry in the meantime?

ARCHER. No, no, friend, all her corn, wine, and oil is ingrossed to my market. And once more I warn you to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul of me, by this light you shall go to the bottom! What! make prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruise for you!—

AIMWELL. Well, well, I won't.

Exit ARCHER

1 Hero of La Calprenède's *Cassandra*.
2 In his *Cléopatre*.
3 Hero of the Spanish chivalric romance.
4 coif.
5 respects.

Enter BONNIFACE

Landlord, have you any tolerable company in the house? I don't care for dining alone.

BONNIFACE. Yes, sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arrived about an hour ago.

AIMWELL. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome everywhere; will you make him a compliment from me and tell him I should be glad of his company?

BONNIFACE. Who shall I tell him, sir, would—

AIMWELL. Ha! that stroke was well thrown in!—I'm only a traveller, like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

BONNIFACE. I obey your commands, as the saying is. *Exit*

Enter ARCHER

ARCHER. 'Sdeath! I had forgot; what title will you give yourself?

AIMWELL. My brother's, to be sure. He would never give me anything else; so I'll make bold with his honor this bout.—You know the rest of your cue.

ARCHER. Aye, aye. *Exit*

Enter GIBBET

GIBBET. Sir, I'm yours.

AIMWELL. 'Tis more than I deserve, sir, for I don't know you.

GIBBET. I don't wonder at that, sir, for you never saw me before—(*Aside*) I hope.

AIMWELL. And pray, sir, how came I by the honor of seeing you now?

GIBBET. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman—but my landlord—

AIMWELL. O sir, I ask your pardon! You're the captain he told me of?

GIBBET. At your service, sir.

AIMWELL. What regiment, may I be so bold?

GIBBET. A marching regiment, sir, an old corps.

AIMWELL. (*Aside*) Very old, if your coat be regimental.—You have served abroad, sir?

GIBBET. Yes, sir, in the plantations[1]; 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service. I would have quitted it, indeed, but a man of honor, you know—Besides, 'twas for the good of my country that I should be abroad.—Anything for the good of one's country—I'm a Roman for that.

AIMWELL. (*Aside*) One of the first, I'll lay my life.—You found the West Indies very hot, sir?

GIBBET. Aye, sir, too hot for me.

AIMWELL. Pray, sir, han't I seen your face at Will's coffee-house?

GIBBET. Yes, sir, and at White's too.

AIMWELL. And where is your company now, Captain?

GIBBET. They an't come yet.

AIMWELL. Why, d'ye expect 'em here?

GIBBET. They'll be here to-night, sir.

AIMWELL. Which way do they march?

GIBBET. Across the country. [*Aside*] The devil's in't, if I han't said enough to encourage him to declare! But I'm afraid he's not right; I must tack about.

AIMWELL. Is your company to quarter in Litchfield?

GIBBET. In this house, sir,

AIMWELL. What! all?

GIBBET. My company's but thin, ha! ha! ha! We are but three, ha! ha! ha!

AIMWELL. You're merry, sir.

GIBBET. Aye, sir, you must excuse me, sir; I understand the world, especially the art of travelling. I don't care, sir, for answering questions directly upon the road—for I generally ride with a charge about me.

AIMWELL. (*Aside*) Three or four, I believe.

GIBBET. I am credibly informed that there are highwaymen upon this quarter; not, sir, that I could suspect a gentleman of your figure—but truly, sir, I have got such a way of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

[1] Whither convicts were deported.

AIMWELL. Your caution may be necessary.—Then I presume you're no captain?

GIBBET. Not I, sir; captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it. It stops a great many foolish inquiries that are generally made about gentlemen that travel; it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient:—and thus far I am a captain, and no farther.

AIMWELL. And pray, sir, what is your true profession?

GIBBET. O sir, you must excuse me!—Upon my word, sir, I don't think it safe to tell you.

AIMWELL. Ha! ha! ha! upon my word, I commend you.

Enter BONNIFACE

Well, Mr. Bonniface, what's the news?

BONNIFACE. There's another gentleman below, as the saying is, that, hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man if you would give him leave.

AIMWELL. What is he?

BONNIFACE. A clergyman, as the saying is.

AIMWELL. A clergyman! Is he really a clergyman? or is it only his "travelling name," as my friend the captain has it?

BONNIFACE. O sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

AIMWELL. Is he a Frenchman?

BONNIFACE. Yes, sir, born at Brussels.

GIBBET. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, sir; I have a value for my reputation, sir.

AIMWELL. Nay, but Captain, since we are by ourselves.—Can he speak English, landlord?

BONNIFACE. Very well, sir; you may know him, as the saying is, to be a foreigner by his accent, and that's all.

AIMWELL. Then he has been in England before?

BONNIFACE. Never, sir; but he's a master of languages, as the saying is. He talks Latin—it do's me good to hear him talk Latin.

AIMWELL. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Bonniface?

BONNIFACE. Not I, sir, as the saying is; but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

AIMWELL. Pray, desire him to walk up.

BONNIFACE. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter FOIGARD

FOIGARD. Save you, gentlemens, both.

AIMWELL. A Frenchman!—Sir, your most humble servant.

FOIGARD. Och, dear joy,[1] I am your most faithful shervant—and yours alsho.

GIBBET. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

FOIGARD. My English is very vel for the vords, but we foregners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronunciation so soon.

AIMWELL. (*Aside*) A foreigner! a downright Teague,[2] by this light!—Were you born in France, doctor?

FOIGARD. I was educated in France, but I was borned at Brussels; I am a subject of the king of Spain, joy.

GIBBET. What king of Spain, sir? speak!

FOIGARD. Upon my shoul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.[3]

AIMWELL. Nay, Captain, that was too hard upon the doctor; he's a stranger.

FOIGARD. Oh, let him alone, dear joy; I am of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

AIMWELL. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute.—Here, landlord, is dinner ready?

BONNIFACE. Upon the table, as the saying is.

AIMWELL. Gentlemen — pray — that door—

FOIGARD. No, no, fait,[4] the captain must lead.

AIMWELL. No, doctor, the church is our guide.

GIBBET. Aye, aye, so it is.

Exit foremost; they follow

1 Darling; a common expression in Ireland.
2 A familiar name for an Irishman.
3 Since the war of the Spanish succession was still going on.
4 Dial. "faith."

SCENE [III]. *A gallery in* LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *house*

Enter ARCHER *and* SCRUB *singing and hugging one another*, SCRUB *with a tankard in his hand*, GIPSEY *listening at a distance*

SCRUB. *Tall, all, dall!*—Come, my dear boy, let's have that song once more.

ARCHER. No, no, we shall disturb the family.—But will you be sure to keep the secret? 5

SCRUB. Pho! upon my honor, as I'm a gentleman.

ARCHER. 'Tis enough. You must know, then, that my master is the Lord Viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not. He never was in this part of England before; so he chose to retire to this place, that's all. 16

GIPSEY. [*Aside*] And that's enough for me. *Exit*

SCRUB. And where were you when your master fought? 20

ARCHER. We never know of our masters' quarrels.

SCRUB. No? If our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do is to tell their wives; the wife tells the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour you shall have the whole county in arms. 28

ARCHER. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for.—But if you should chance to talk now of my business?

SCRUB. Talk! aye, sir, had I not learnt the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family. 34

ARCHER. Aye, aye, to be sure, there are secrets in all families.

SCRUB. Secrets! aye—but I'll say no more. Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard: here— 39

ARCHER. With all my heart; who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh? Here's your ladies' healths; you have three, I think, and to be sure there must be secrets among 'em. 44

SCRUB. Secrets! aye, friend—I wish I had a friend!

ARCHER. Am not I your friend? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

SCRUB. Shall we? 49

ARCHER. From this minute. Give me a kiss—and now, brother Scrub—

SCRUB. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret that will make your hair stand on end. You must know that I am consumedly in love. 55

ARCHER. That's a terrible secret, that's the truth on't.

SCRUB. That jade, Gipsey, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the arrantest whore that ever wore a petticoat; and I'm dying for love of her. 61

ARCHER. Ha! ha! ha!—Are you in love with her person or her virtue, brother Scrub?

SCRUB. I should like virtue best, because it is more durable than beauty; for virtue holds good with some women long, and many a day after they have lost it. 67

ARCHER. —In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost till a bastard be found.

SCRUB. Aye, could I bring her to a bastard, I should have her all to myself; but I dare not put it upon that lay, for fear of being sent for a soldier. Pray, brother, how do you gentlemen in London like that same Pressing Act? 76

ARCHER. Very ill, brother Scrub; 'tis the worst that ever was made for us. Formerly I remember the good days, when we could dun our masters for our wages, and if they refused to pay us we could have a warrant to carry 'em before a justice. But now if we talk of eating, they have a warrant for us and carry us before three justices. 84

SCRUB. And to be sure we go, if we talk of eating; for the justices won't give their own servants a bad example. Now, this is my misfortune—I dare not speak in the house, while that jade Gipsey dings about like a fury.—Once I had the better end of the staff. 91

ARCHER. And how comes the change now?

SCRUB. Why, the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

ARCHER. A priest!

SCRUB. Aye, a damned son of a whore of Babylon that came over hither to say grace to the French officers and eat up our provisions. There's not a day goes over his head without dinner or supper in this house.

ARCHER. How came he so familiar in the family?

SCRUB. Because he speaks English as if he had lived here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

ARCHER. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affections of your Gipsey.

SCRUB. Converted! aye, and perverted, my dear friend, for I'm afraid he has made her a whore and a papist! But this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen—they're in the confederacy, and for some private ends of their own, to be sure.

ARCHER. A very hopeful family yours, brother Scrub! I suppose the maiden lady has her lover too?

SCRUB. Not that I know: she's the best on 'em, that's the truth on't. But they take care to prevent my curiosity by giving me so much business that I'm a perfect slave. What d'ye think is my place in this family?

ARCHER. Butler, I suppose.

SCRUB. Ah, Lord help you! I'll tell you. Of a Monday I drive the coach, of a Tuesday I drive the plough, on Wednesday I follow the hounds, a-Thursday I dun the tenants, on Friday I go to market, on Saturday I draw warrants, and a-Sunday I draw beer.

ARCHER. Ha! ha! ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother. But what ladies are those? [*Looks off stage*]

SCRUB. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other is Mrs. Dorinda. Don't mind 'em; sit still, man.

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA

MRS. SULLEN. I have heard my brother talk of my Lord Aimwell; but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

DORINDA. That's impossible, sister.

MRS. SULLEN. He's vastly rich, but very close, they say.

DORINDA. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him. I have heard say that people may be guessed at by the behavior of their servants; I could wish we might talk to that fellow.

MRS. SULLEN. So do I, for I think he's a very pretty fellow. Come this way; I'll throw out a lure for him presently.

They walk a turn towards the opposite side of the stage; MRS. SULLEN *drops her glove.* ARCHER *runs, takes it up, and gives it to her*

ARCHER. [*Aside*] Corn, wine, and oil indeed!—but I think the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice.—Ah, ah, say you so!—Madam—your ladyship's glove.

MRS. SULLEN. O sir, I thank you!—What a handsome bow the fellow has!

DORINDA. Bow! Why, I have known several footmen come down from London set up here for dancing-masters and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

ARCHER. (*Aside*) That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours.—Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

SCRUB. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant that you see at church to-day; I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might show me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

DORINDA. And I hope you have made much of him?

ARCHER. Oh yes, madam, but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

MRS. SULLEN. What, then you don't usually drink ale?

ARCHER. No, madam; my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water. 'Tis prescribed me by the physician for a remedy against the spleen.

SCRUB. O la! O la! a footman have the spleen!

MRS. SULLEN. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality.

ARCHER. Madam, like all other fashions it wears out, and so descends to their servants—tho' in a great many of us, I believe, it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

DORINDA. How affectedly the fellow talks!—How long, pray, have you served your present master?

ARCHER. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

MRS. SULLEN. And pray, which service do you like best?

ARCHER. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honor of serving them is sufficient wages. There is a charm in their looks that delivers a pleasure with their commands and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

MRS. SULLEN. [*Aside*] That flight was above the pitch of a livery.—[*Aloud*] And, sir, would not you be satisfied to serve a lady again?

ARCHER. As a groom of the chamber, madam, but not as a footman.

MRS. SULLEN. I suppose you served as footman before?

ARCHER. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London. My Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I served, called me up one morning, and told me, "Martin, go to my Lady Allnight with my humble service; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of are stopped till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that in the meantime there is a person about her ladyship that, from several hints and surmises, was accessory at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things that to her knowledge are of more importance—"

MRS. SULLEN. } Ha! ha! ha! where are
DORINDA. } you going, sir?

ARCHER. Why, I han't half done!—The whole "howd'ye" was about half an hour long; so I happened to misplace two syllables, and was turned off and rendered incapable.

DORINDA. The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw!—But, friend, if your master be married I presume you still serve a lady?

ARCHER. No, madam, I take care never to come into a married family; the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary that 'tis impossible to please both.

DORINDA. (*Aside*) There's a main point gained: my lord is not married, I find.

MRS. SULLEN. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services you had not a better provision made for you.

ARCHER. I don't know how, madam. I had a lieutenancy offered me three or four times, but that is not bread, madam—I live much better as I do.

SCRUB. Madam, he sings rarely! I was thought to do pretty well here in the country till he came; but alack a day, I'm nothing to my brother Martin!

DORINDA. Does he?—Pray, sir, will you oblige us with a song?

ARCHER. Are you for passion or humor?

SCRUB. O le! he has the purest ballad about a trifle—

MRS. SULLEN. A trifle! pray, sir, let's have it.

ARCHER. I'm ashamed to offer you a trifle, madam; but since you command me—

(*Sings to the tune of Sir Simon the King*[1])

A trifling song you shall hear,
Begun with a trifle and ended.
[All trifling people draw near,
And I shall be nobly attended.

Were it not for trifles a few,
That lately have come into play;
The men would want something to do,
And the women want something to say.

[1] First given in full in 1721 edition.

What makes men trifle in dressing?
Because the ladies (they know)
Admire, by often possessing,
That eminent trifle a beau.

When the lover his moments has trifled,
The trifle of trifles to gain;
No sooner the virgin is rifled,
But a trifle shall part 'em again.

What mortal man would be able
At White's half an hour to sit?
Or who could bear a tea-table
Without talking of trifles for wit?

The court is from trifles secure;
Gold keys are no trifles, we see:
White rods are no trifles, I'm sure,
Whatever their bearers may be.

But if you will go to the place
Where trifles abundantly breed,
The levee will show you his Grace
Makes promises trifles indeed.

A coach with six footmen behind,
I count neither trifle nor sin:
But, ye gods! how oft do we find
A scandalous trifle within!

A flask of champagne, people think it
A trifle, or something as bad:
But if you'll contrive how to drink it,
You'll find it no trifle, egad!

A parson's a trifle at sea,
A widow's a trifle in sorrow;
A peace is a trifle to-day,
Who knows what may happen to-morrow?

A black coat a trifle may cloak,
Or to hide it the red may endeavor:
But if once the army is broke,
We shall have more trifles than ever.

The stage is a trifle, they say;
The reason, pray, carry along:
Because at ev'ry new play,
The house they with trifles so throng.

But with people's malice to trifle,
And to set us all on a foot:
The author of this is a trifle,
And his song is a trifle to boot.]

MRS. SULLEN. Very well, sir, we're obliged to you.—Something for a pair of gloves.

(*Offering him money*)

ARCHER. I humbly beg leave to be excused. My master, madam, pays me; nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honor and disobeying his commands. [*Exit* ARCHER *with* SCRUB]

DORINDA. This is surprising! Did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow?

MRS. SULLEN. The devil take him for wearing that livery!

DORINDA. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitched upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in this dress and who, ten to one, was his second too.

MRS. SULLEN. It is so, it must be so, and it shall be so!—for I like him.

DORINDA. What! better than the Count?

MRS. SULLEN. The Count happened to be the most agreeable man upon the place, and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband. But I should like this fellow better in a design upon myself.

DORINDA. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord and this gentleman; how shall we bring that about?

MRS. SULLEN. Patience! You country ladies give no quarter if once you be entered. Would you prevent their desires and give the fellows no wishing-time? Look ye, Dorinda, if my Lord Aimwell loves you or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it. My business comes now upon the tapis. Have you prepared your brother?

DORINDA. Yes, yes.

MRS. SULLEN. And how did he relish it?

DORINDA. He said little, mumbled something to himself, promised to be guided by me—but here he comes.

Enter SULLEN

SULLEN. What singing was that I heard just now?

MRS. SULLEN. The singing in your head, my dear; you complained of it all day.

SULLEN. You're impertinent.

MRS. SULLEN. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

SULLEN. One flesh! rather two carcasses joined unnaturally together.

MRS. SULLEN. Or rather a living soul coupled to a dead body.

DORINDA. So! This is fine encouragement for me!

SULLEN. Yes, my wife shows you what you must do.

MRS. SULLEN. And my husband shows you what you must suffer.

SULLEN. 'Sdeath, why can't you be silent?

MRS. SULLEN. 'Sdeath, why can't you talk?

SULLEN. Do you talk to any purpose?

MRS. SULLEN. Do you think to any purpose?

SULLEN. Sister, hark'ye—(*Whispers*)—I shan't be home till it be late. *Exit*

MRS. SULLEN. What did he whisper to ye?

DORINDA. That he would go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen as I directed him. But let me beg you once more, dear sister, to drop this project; for as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to a rage, and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him?

MRS. SULLEN. I'm provided to receive him, I warrant you. But here comes the count: vanish! *Exit* DORINDA

Enter COUNT BELLAIR

Don't you wonder, Monsieur le Count, that I was not at church this afternoon?

COUNT. I more wonder, madam, that you go dere at all, or how you dare to lift those eyes to Heaven that are guilty of so much killing.

MRS. SULLEN. If Heaven, sir, has given to my eyes with the power of killing the virtue of making a cure, I hope the one may atone for the other.

COUNT. Oh, largely, madam. Would your ladyship be as ready to apply the remedy as to give the wound? Consider, madam, I am doubly a prisoner—first to the arms of your general, then to your more conquering eyes. My first chains are easy—there a ransom may redeem me; but from your fetters I never shall get free.

MRS. SULLEN. Alas, sir! why should you complain to me of your captivity, who am in chains myself? You know, sir, that I am bound, nay, must be tied up in that particular that might give you ease. I am like you, a prisoner of war—of war indeed!—I have given my parole of honor! Would you break yours to gain your liberty?

COUNT. Most certainly I would, were I a prisoner among the Turks. Dis is your case; you're a slave, madam—slave to the worst of Turks, a husband.

MRS. SULLEN. There lies my foible, I confess; no fortifications, no courage, conduct, nor vigilancy can pretend to defend a place where the cruelty of the governor forces the garrison to mutiny.

COUNT. And where de besieger is resolved to die before de place. Here will I fix;—(*Kneels*) with tears, vows and prayers assault your heart, and never rise till you surrender; or if I must storm—Love and St. Michael!—And so I begin the attack.

MRS. SULLEN. Stand off!—Sure he hears me not! (*Aside*) And I could almost wish he—did not! The fellow makes love very prettily.—But, sir, why should you put such a value upon my person, when you see it despised by one that knows it so much better?

COUNT. He knows it not, tho' he possesses it; if he but knew the value of the jewel he is master of, he would always wear it next his heart and sleep with it in his arms.

MRS. SULLEN. But since he throws me unregarded from him—

COUNT. And one that knows your value well comes by and takes you up, is it not justice? (*Goes to lay hold on her*)

Enter SULLEN *with his sword drawn*

SULLEN. Hold, villain, hold!

MRS. SULLEN. (*Presenting a pistol*) Do you hold!

SULLEN. What! murther your husband to defend your bully!

MRS. SULLEN. Bully! For shame, Mr. Sullen. Bullies wear long swords; the gentleman has none. He 's a prisoner, you know. I was aware of your outrage, and prepared this to receive your violence—and, if occasion were, to preserve myself against the force of this other gentleman.

COUNT. O madam, your eyes be bettre firearms than your pistol; they nevre miss.

SULLEN. What! court my wife to my face!

MRS. SULLEN. Pray, Mr. Sullen, put up; suspend your fury for a minute.

SULLEN. To give you time to invent an excuse!

MRS. SULLEN. I need none.

SULLEN. No, for I heard every syllable of your discourse.

COUNT. Aye! and begar, I tink de dialogue was vera pretty.

MRS. SULLEN. Then I suppose, sir, you heard something of your own barbarity?

SULLEN. Barbarity! Oons, what does the woman call barbarity? Do I ever meddle with you?

MRS. SULLEN. No.

SULLEN. As for you, sir, I shall take another time.

COUNT. Ah, begar, and so must I.

SULLEN. Look'e, madam, don't think that my anger proceeds from any concern I have for your honor, but for my own: and if you can contrive any way of being a whore without making me a cuckold, do it and welcome.

MRS. SULLEN. Sir, I thank you kindly; you would allow me the sin but rob me of the pleasure. No, no, I'm resolved never to venture upon the crime without the satisfaction of seeing you punished for't.

SULLEN. Then will you grant me this, my dear? Let anybody else do you the favor but that Frenchman, for I mortally hate his whole generation. [*Exit* SULLEN]

COUNT. Ah, sir, that be ungrateful, for, begar, I love some of yours.—Madam—

(*Approaching her*)

MRS. SULLEN. No, sir.

COUNT. No, sir! Garzoon, madam, I am not your husband.

MRS. SULLEN. 'Tis time to undeceive you, sir. I believed your addresses to me were no more than an amusement, and I hope you will think the same of my complaisance; and to convince you that you ought, you must know that I brought you hither only to make you instrumental in setting me right with my husband, for he was planted to listen by my appointment.

COUNT. By your appointment?

MRS. SULLEN. Certainly.

COUNT. And so, madam, while I was telling twenty stories to part you from your husband, begar, I was bringing you together all the while?

MRS. SULLEN. I ask your pardon, sir, but I hope this will give you a taste of the virtue of the English ladies.

COUNT. Begar, madam, your vertue be vera great, but garzoon, your honeste be vera little.

Enter DORINDA

MRS. SULLEN. Nay, now you're angry, sir.

COUNT. Angry!—*Fair Dorinda* (*Sings Dorinda, the opera tune, and addresses to* DORINDA) Madam, when your ladyship want a fool, send for me. *Fair Dorinda, Revenge,* etc. *Exit*

MRS. SULLEN. There goes the true humor of his nation—resentment with good manners, and the height of anger in a song! Well, sister, you must be judge, for you have heard the trial.

DORINDA. And I bring in my brother guilty.

MRS. SULLEN. But I must bear the punishment. 'Tis hard, sister.

DORINDA. I own it; but you must have patience.

MRS. SULLEN. Patience! the cant of custom —Providence sends no evil without a remedy. Should I lie groaning under a yoke I can shake off, I were accessory to my ruin, and my patience were no better than self-murder.

DORINDA. But how can you shake off the yoke? Your divisions don't come within the reach of the law for a divorce.

MRS. SULLEN. Law! What law can search into the remote abyss of nature? what evidence can prove the unaccountable disaffections of wedlock? Can a jury sum up the endless aversions that are rooted in our souls, or can a bench give judgment upon antipathies? 559

DORINDA. They never pretended, sister; they never meddle but in case of uncleanness.

MRS. SULLEN. Uncleanness! O sister! casual violation is a transient injury, and may possibly be repaired; but can radical hatreds be ever reconciled? No, no, sister, nature is the first lawgiver, and when she has set tempers opposite, not all the golden links of wedlock nor iron manacles of law can keep 'um fast. 569

Wedlock we own ordained by Heaven's decree,
But such as Heaven ordained it first to be;—
Concurring tempers in the man and wife
As mutual helps to draw the load of life.
View all the works of Providence above:
The stars with harmony and concord move.
View all the works of Providence below:
The fire, the water, earth, and air, we know,
All in one plant agree to make it grow.
Must man, the chiefest work of art divine,
Be doomed in endless discord to repine?
No, we should injure Heaven by that surmise: 581
Omnipotence is just, were man but wise.

ACT IV

SCENE [I] *continues.* [*A gallery in* LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *house*]

Enter MRS. SULLEN

MRS. SULLEN. Were I born an humble Turk, where women have no soul nor property, there I must sit contented. But in England, a country whose women are its glory, must women be abused? where women rule, must women be enslaved? Nay, cheated into slavery, mocked by a promise of comfortable society into a wilderness of solitude! I dare not keep the thought about me. Oh, here comes something to divert me. 10

Enter a Country Woman

WOMAN. I come, an't please your ladyship—you're my Lady Bountiful, an't ye?

MRS. SULLEN. Well, good woman, go on.

WOMAN. I come seventeen long mail to have a cure for my husband's sore leg. 15

MRS. SULLEN. Your husband! What, woman, cure your husband?

WOMAN. Aye, poor man, for his sore leg won't let him stir from home. 19

MRS. SULLEN. There, I confess, you have given me a reason. Well, good woman, I'll tell you what you must do. You must lay your husband's leg upon a table, and with a chopping-knife you must lay it open as broad as you can; then you must take out the bone and beat the flesh soundly with a rolling-pin; then take salt, pepper, cloves, mace, and ginger, some sweet herbs, and season it very well; then roll it up like brawn, and put it into the oven for two hours. 31

WOMAN. Heavens reward your ladyship! —I have two little babies too that are piteous bad with the graips, an't please ye.

MRS. SULLEN. Put a little pepper and salt in their bellies, good woman. 36

Enter LADY BOUNTIFUL

—I beg your ladyship's pardon for taking your business out of your hands; I have been a-tampering here a little with one of your patients. 40

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Come, good woman, don't mind this mad creature; I am the person that you want, I suppose. What would you have, woman? 44

MRS. SULLEN. She wants something for her husband's sore leg.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. What's the matter with his leg, goody? 48

WOMAN. It come first, as one might say, with a sort of dizziness in his foot, then he had a kind of a laziness in his joints, and then his leg broke out, and then it swelled,

and then it closed again, and then it broke out again, and then it festered, and then it grew better, and then it grew worse again.

MRS. SULLEN. Ha! ha! ha!

LADY BOUNTIFUL. How can you be merry with the misfortunes of other people?

MRS. SULLEN. Because my own make me sad, madam.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. The worst reason in the world, daughter; your own misfortunes should teach you to pity others.

MRS. SULLEN. But the woman's misfortunes and mine are nothing alike; her husband is sick, and mine, alas! is in health.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. What! would you wish your husband sick?

MRS. SULLEN. Not of a sore leg, of all things.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Well, good woman, go to the pantry, get your belly-full of victuals; then I'll give you a receipt of diet-drink for your husband. But d'ye hear, goody, you must not let your husband move too much.

WOMAN. No, no, madam, the poor man's inclinable enough to lie still. *Exit*

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Well, daughter Sullen, tho' you laugh, I have done miracles about the country here with my receipts.

MRS. SULLEN. Miracles indeed, if they have cured anybody; but I believe, madam, the patient's faith goes farther toward the miracle than your prescription.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Fancy helps in some cases. But there's your husband, who has as little fancy as anybody; I brought him from death's door.

MRS. SULLEN. I suppose, madam, you made him drink plentifully of ass's milk.

Enter DORINDA *and runs to* MRS. SULLEN

DORINDA. News, dear sister! news! news!

Enter ARCHER, *running*

ARCHER. Where, where is my Lady Bountiful?—Pray, which is the old lady of you three?

LADY BOUNTIFUL. I am.

ARCHER. O madam, the fame of your ladyship's charity, goodness, benevolence, skill, and ability, have drawn me hither to implore your ladyship's help in behalf of my unfortunate master, who is this moment breathing his last.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Your master! where is he?

ARCHER. At your gate, madam. Drawn by the appearance of your handsome house to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue within five paces of the court-yard, he was taken ill of a sudden with a sort of I-know-not-what; but down he fell, and there he lies.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Here, Scrub! Gipsey! all run, get my easy chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly —quickly!

ARCHER. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Is your master used to these fits?

ARCHER. O yes, madam, frequently: I have known him have five or six of a night.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. What's his name?

ARCHER. Lord, madam, he's a-dying! A minute's care or neglect may save or destroy his life.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Ah, poor gentleman!—Come, friend, show me the way; I'll see him brought in myself. *Exit with* ARCHER

DORINDA. O sister, my heart flutters about strangely! I can hardly forbear running to his assistance.

MRS. SULLEN. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants it. Did not I tell you that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician; put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes, plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with him.

DORINDA. O sister! I'm but a young gunner. I shall be afraid to shoot, for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

MRS. SULLEN. Never fear: you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

DORINDA. No, no, dear sister; you have missed your mark so unfortunately that I shan't care for being instructed by you.

Enter AIMWELL *in a chair carried by* ARCHER *and* SCRUB, L[ADY] BOUNTIFUL, GIPSEY; AIMWELL *is counterfeiting a swoon*

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Here, here, let's see the hartshorn-drops.—Gipsey, a glass of fair water! His fit's very strong.—Bless me, how his hands are clinched!

ARCHER. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? Why don't you help us?—Pray, madam (*To* DORINDA), take his hand and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head.

(DORINDA *takes his hand*)

DORINDA. Poor gentleman!—Oh!—he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully—

LADY BOUNTIFUL. 'Tis the violence of his convulsion, child.

ARCHER. O madam, he's perfectly possessed in these cases—he'll bite if you don't have a care.

DORINDA. Oh, my hand! my hand!

LADY BOUNTIFUL. What's the matter with the foolish girl? I have got this hand open, you see, with a great deal of ease.

ARCHER. Aye, but madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

MRS. SULLEN. I find, friend, you're very learned in these sorts of fits.

ARCHER. 'Tis no wonder, madam, for I'm often troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute.

(*Looking hard at* MRS. SULLEN)

MRS. SULLEN. (*Aside*) I fancy I could find a way to cure you.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. His fit holds him very long.

ARCHER. Longer than usual, madam.—Pray, young lady, open his breast and give him air.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Where did his illness take him first, pray?

ARCHER. To-day at church, madam.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. In what manner was he taken?

ARCHER. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which, at the first, he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Wind, nothing but wind.

ARCHER. By soft degrees it grew and mounted to his brain—there his fancy caught it; there formed it so beautiful, and dressed it up in such gay, pleasing colors, that his transported appetite seized the fair idea, and straight conveyed it to his heart. That hospitable seat of life sent all its sanguine spirits forth to meet, and opened all its sluicy gates to take the stranger in.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to.—Oh—he recovers!—The lavender water—some feathers to burn under his nose—Hungary-water to rub his temples.—Oh, he comes to himself!—Hem a little, sir, hem.—Gipsey, bring the cordial-water.

(AIMWELL *seems to awake in amaze*)

DORINDA. How d'ye, sir?

AIMWELL. Where am I? (*Rising*)
Sure I have passed the gulf of silent death,
And now I land on the Elysian shore—
Behold the goddess of those happy plains,
Fair Proserpine—let me adore thy bright divinity.

(*Kneels to* DORINDA, *and kisses her hand*)

MRS. SULLEN. So, so, so! I knew where the fit would end!

AIMWELL. Eurydice perhaps—
How could thy Orpheus keep his word,
And not look back upon thee?
No treasure but thyself could sure have bribed him
To look one minute off thee.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Delirious, poor gentleman!

ARCHER. Very delirious, madam, very delirious.

AIMWELL. Martin's voice, I think.

ARCHER. Yes, my lord.—How does your lordship?

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Lord! did you mind that, girls?

AIMWELL. Where am I?

ARCHER. In very good hands, sir. You were taken just now with one of your old

fits, under the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to yourself, as you see.

AIMWELL. I am so confounded with shame, madam, that I can now only beg pardon—and refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care till an opportunity offers of making some amends. I dare be no longer troublesome.—Martin, give two guineas to the servants. (*Going*)

DORINDA. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, sir, as if you were perfectly recovered.

(*Here* ARCHER *talks to* LADY BOUNTIFUL *in dumb show*)

AIMWELL. That I shall never be, madam; my present illness is so rooted that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

MRS. SULLEN. Don't despair, sir; I have known several in your distemper shake it off with a fortnight's physic.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Come, sir, your servant has been telling me that you're apt to relapse if you go into the air.—Your good manners shan't get the better of ours—you shall sit down again, sir. Come, sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country—here, sir, my service t'ye.—You shall taste my water; 'tis a cordial, I can assure you, and of my own making.—Drink it off, sir.—(AIMWELL *drinks*) And how d'ye find yourself now, sir?

AIMWELL. Somewhat better—tho' very faint still.

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Aye, aye, people are always faint after these fits.—Come, girls, you shall show the gentleman the house.—'Tis but an old family building, sir; but you had better walk about and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air. You'll find some tolerable pictures.—Dorinda, show the gentleman the way.

Exit

I must go to the poor woman below.

DORINDA. This way, sir.

AIMWELL. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait on you? for he understands pictures very well.

MRS. SULLEN. Sir, we understand originals[1] as well as he does pictures; so he may come along.

Exeunt DORINDA, MRS. SULLEN, AIMWELL, ARCHER. AIMWELL *leads* DORINDA

Enter FOIGARD *and* SCRUB, *meeting*

FOIGARD. Save you, Master Scrub!

SCRUB. Sir, I won't be saved your way—I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil. Sir, I'm a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

FOIGARD. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I would be speaking with Mrs. Shipsey.

SCRUB. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, sir; she's gone abroad sir; she's—dead two months ago, sir.

Enter GIPSEY

GIPSEY. How now, impudence! How dare you talk so saucily to the doctor?—Pray, sir, don't take it ill, for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers as—

SCRUB. You lie! you lie! 'tis the common people that are civilest to strangers.

GIPSEY. Sirrah, I have a good mind to—Get you out, I say!

SCRUB. I won't.

GIPSEY. You won't, sauce-box!—Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

SCRUB. The captain! ah, the devil, there she hampers me again. The captain has me on one side, and the priest on t'other; so between the gown and the sword, I have a fine time on't.—But, *Cedunt arma togæ*.[2]

(*Going*)

GIPSEY. What, sirrah, won't you march?

SCRUB. No, my dear, I won't march—but I'll walk.—[*Aside*] And I'll make bold to listen a little too.

(*Goes behind the side-scene and listens*)

GIPSEY. Indeed, doctor, the Count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on't.

[1] A play upon the old meaning of "fool."
[2] Arms yield to the toga.

FOIGARD. Ah, Mrs. Gipsey, upon my shoul, now, gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration! He veeps, and he dances, and he fistles, and he swears, and he laughs, and he stamps, and he sings; in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted *à la française*, and a stranger would not know whider to cry or to laugh with him.

GIPSEY. What would you have me do, doctor?

FOIGARD. Noting, joy, but only hide the Count in Mrs. Sullen's closhet when it is dark.

GIPSEY. Nothing! is that nothing? It would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

FOIGARD. Here is twenty louis d'ors, joy, for your shame, and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

GIPSEY. But won't that money look like a bribe?

FOIGARD. Dat is according as you shall tauk it. If you receive the money beforehand, 'twill be *logicè*, a bribe; but if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be only a gratification.

GIPSEY. Well, doctor, I'll take it *logicè*.—But what must I do with my conscience, sir?

FOIGARD. Leave dat wid me, joy; I am your priest, gra, and your conscience is under my hands.

GIPSEY. But should I put the Count into the closet—

FOIGARD. Vel, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closhet? One may go to prayers in a closhet.

GIPSEY. But if the lady should come into her chamber and go to bed?

FOIGARD. Vel, and is dere any shin in going to bed, joy?

GIPSEY. Aye, but if the parties should meet, doctor?

FOIGARD. Vel den—the parties must be responsable. Do you be after putting the Count in the closhet, and leave the shins wid themselves. I will come with the Count to instruct you in your chamber.

GIPSEY. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure! Methinks I'm so easy after an absolution, and can sin afresh with so much security, that I'm resolved to die a martyr to't. Here's the key of the garden-door. Come in the back way when 'tis late; I'll be ready to receive you. But don't so much as whisper; only take hold of my hand; I'll lead you, and do you lead the Count and follow me.

[*Exeunt* FOIGARD *and* GIPSEY]

Enter SCRUB

SCRUB. What witchcraft, now, have these two imps of the devil been a-hatching here?—There's twenty louis d'ors; I heard that and saw the purse.—But I must give room to my betters. *Exit*

Enter AIMWELL, *leading* DORINDA, *and making love in dumb show;* MRS. SULLEN *and* ARCHER

MRS. SULLEN. Pray, sir (*To* ARCHER), how d'ye like that piece?

ARCHER. Oh, 'tis Leda! You find, madam, how Jupiter comes disguised to make love—

MRS. SULLEN. But what think you there of Alexander's battles?

ARCHER. We want only a Le Brun, madam, to draw greater battles and a greater general of our own. The Danube, madam, would make a greater figure in a picture than the Granicus; and we have our Ramillies to match their Arbela.

MRS. SULLEN. Pray, sir, what head is that in the corner there?

ARCHER. O madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

MRS. SULLEN. What was he banished for?

ARCHER. His ambitious love, madam.—(*Bowing*) His misfortune touches me.

MRS. SULLEN. Was he successful in his amours?

ARCHER. There he has left us in the dark. He was too much a gentleman to tell.

MRS. SULLEN. If he were secret, I pity him.

ARCHER. And if he were successful, I envy him.

MRS. SULLEN. How d'ye like that Venus over the chimney?

ARCHER. Venus! I protest, madam, I took it for your picture; but now I look again, 'tis not handsome enough.

MRS. SULLEN. Oh, what a charm is flattery! If you would see my picture, there it is over that cabinet. How d'ye like it?

ARCHER. I must admire anything, madam, that has the least resemblance of you. But methinks, madam—(*He looks at the picture and* MRS. SULLEN *three or four times, by turns*) Pray, madam, who drew it?

MRS. SULLEN. A famous hand, sir.

(*Here* AIMWELL *and* DORINDA *go off*)

ARCHER. A famous hand, madam!—Your eyes, indeed, are featured there; but where's the sparkling moisture, shining fluid in which they swim? The picture, indeed, has your dimples; but where's the swarm of killing Cupids that should ambush there? The lips too are figured out; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness, that tempts the taste in the original?

MRS. SULLEN. [*Aside*] Had it been my lot to have matched with such a man!

ARCHER. Your breasts too—presumptuous man! What, paint Heaven?—Apropos, madam, in the very next picture is Salmoneus, that was struck dead with lightning for offering to imitate Jove's thunder; I hope you served the painter so, madam?

MRS. SULLEN. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they should employ their lightning better.

ARCHER. There's the finest bed in that room, madam—I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bedchamber.

MRS. SULLEN. And what then, sir?

ARCHER. I think the quilt is the richest that ever I saw. I can't at this distance, madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery. Will you give me leave, madam?

MRS. SULLEN. [*Aside*] The devil take his impudence!—Sure, if I gave him an opportunity, he durst not offer it!—I have a great mind to try.—(*Going: returns*) 'Sdeath, what am I doing?—And alone, too!—Sister! sister! (*Runs out*)

ARCHER. I'll follow her close—

For where a Frenchman durst attempt to storm,
A Briton sure may well the work perform.

(*Going*)

Enter SCRUB

SCRUB. Martin! brother Martin!

ARCHER. O brother Scrub, I beg your pardon; I was not a-going. Here's a guinea my master ordered you.

SCRUB. A guinea! hi! hi! hi! a guinea! eh—by this light, it is a guinea! But I suppose you expect one and twenty shillings in change?

ARCHER. Not at all; I have another for Gipsey.

SCRUB. A guinea for her? Faggot and fire for the witch!—Sir, give me that guinea and I'll discover a plot.

ARCHER. A plot!

SCRUB. Aye, sir, a plot, a horrid plot! First, it must be a plot because there 's a woman in't; secondly, it must be a plot because there 's a priest in't; thirdly, it must be a plot because there 's French gold in't; and fourthly, it must be a plot because I don't know what to make on't.

ARCHER. Nor anybody else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

SCRUB. Truly, I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery and a riddle. This I know, that here has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand and an absolution in the other, and Gipsey has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down—my eyes shall take their oath on't.

ARCHER. And is all this bustle about Gipsey?

SCRUB. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there, but I remember they mentioned a count, a closet, a back door, and a key.

ARCHER. The Count!—Did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

SCRUB. I did hear some word that sounded that way; but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda, I could not distinguish.

ARCHER. You have told this matter to nobody, brother?

SCRUB. Told! No, sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolved never to speak one word *pro* nor *con* till we have a peace.

ARCHER. You're i'th' right, brother Scrub. Here's a treaty afoot between the Count and the lady: the priest and the chamber-maid are the plenipotentiaries.—It shall go hard but I find a way to be included in the treaty.—Where's the doctor now?

SCRUB. He and Gipsey are this moment devouring my lady's marmalade in the closet.

AIMWELL. (*From without*) Martin! Martin!

ARCHER. I come, sir; I come.

SCRUB. But you forget the other guinea, brother Martin.

ARCHER. Here, I give it with all my heart.

SCRUB. And I take it with all my soul.—

[*Exit* ARCHER]

I'cod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipsey! And if you should set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off.

[*Exit* SCRUB]

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA, *meeting*

MRS. SULLEN. Well, sister?

DORINDA. And well, sister!

MRS. SULLEN. What's become of my lord?

DORINDA. What's become of his servant?

MRS. SULLEN. Servant! He's a prettier fellow and a finer gentleman, by fifty degrees, than his master.

DORINDA. O' my conscience, I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows-foot!

MRS. SULLEN. O' my conscience I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

DORINDA. You desired me, sister, to leave you when you transgressed the bounds of honor.

MRS. SULLEN. Thou dear censorious country-girl! What dost mean? You can't think of the man without the bedfellow, I find.

DORINDA. I don't find anything unnatural in that thought. While the mind is conversant with flesh and blood, it must conform to the humors of the company.

MRS. SULLEN. How a little love and good company improves a woman! Why, child, you begin to live—you never spoke before.

DORINDA. Because I was never spoke to.—My lord has told me that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

MRS. SULLEN. You're in the right, Dorinda, pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily bread; and she's a fool that won't believe a man there, as much as she that believes him in anything else. But I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

DORINDA. Done! What did your fellow say to ye?

MRS. SULLEN. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

DORINDA. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

MRS. SULLEN. Common cant! Had my spark called me a Venus directly, I should have believed him a footman in good earnest.

DORINDA. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

MRS. SULLEN. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

DORINDA. Mine vowed to die for me.

MRS. SULLEN. Mine swore to die with me.

DORINDA. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

MRS. SULLEN. Mine had his moving things too.

DORINDA. Mine kissed my hand ten thousand times.

MRS. SULLEN. Mine has all that pleasure to come.

DORINDA. Mine offered marriage.

MRS. SULLEN. O Lard! D'ye call that a moving thing?

DORINDA. The sharpest arrow in his quiver, my dear sister! Why, my ten thousand pounds may lie brooding here this seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some ill-natured clown like yours. Whereas, if I marry my Lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence, the park, the play, and the drawing-room, splendor, equipage, noise, and flambeaux.—*Hey, my Lady Aimwell's servants there!—Lights, lights to the stairs!—My Lady Aimwell's coach put forward!—Stand by, make room for her ladyship!*—Are not these things moving?—What! melancholy of a sudden?

MRS. SULLEN. Happy, happy sister! Your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept regardless of his charge. Long smiling years of circling joys for you, but not one hour for me! (*Weeps*)

DORINDA. Come, my dear, we'll talk of something else.

MRS. SULLEN. O Dorinda! I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul, easy and yielding to soft desires—a spacious heart, where love and all his train might lodge. And must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

DORINDA. Meaning your husband, I suppose?

MRS. SULLEN. Husband! No, even husband is too soft a name for him.—But come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow. He was abroad when my father married me; perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

DORINDA. Will you promise not to make yourself easy in the meantime with my lord's friend?

MRS. SULLEN. You mistake me, sister. It happens with us as among the men—the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards. And there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle which might do more mischief if they took another course.—Tho', to confess the truth, I do love that fellow;—and if I met him dressed as he should be, and I undressed as I should be—look ye, sister, I have no supernatural gifts—I can't swear I could resist the temptation, tho' I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do.

Exeunt MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA

SCENE [II]. *The Inn*

Enter AIMWELL *and* ARCHER *laughing*

ARCHER. And the awkward kindness of the good, motherly old gentlewoman—

AIMWELL. And the coming easiness of the young one—'Sdeath, 'tis pity to deceive her!

ARCHER. Nay, if you adhere to those principles, stop where you are.

AIMWELL. I can't stop, for I love her to distraction.

ARCHER. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's breadth beyond discretion, you must go no farther.

AIMWELL. Well, well, anything to deliver us from sauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Will's[1]; and be stinted to bear looking at our old acquaintance, the cards, because our impotent pockets can't afford us a guinea for the mercenary drabs.

ARCHER. Or be obliged to some purse-proud coxcomb for a scandalous bottle, where we must not pretend to our share of the discourse because we can't pay our club o'th' reckoning.—Damn it, I had rather spunge upon Morris,[1] and sup upon a dish of bohee scored behind the door!

AIMWELL. And there expose our want of sense by talking criticisms, as we should our want of money by railing at the government.

ARCHER. Or be obliged to sneak into the side-box, and between both houses steal two acts of a play,[2] and because we han't money to see the other three, we come away discontented and damn the whole five.

AIMWELL. And ten thousand such rascally tricks—had we out-lived our fortunes among our acquaintance.—But now—

ARCHER. Aye, now is the time to prevent all this—strike while the iron is hot.—This priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you and pimp for me.

AIMWELL. But I should not like a woman that can be so fond of a Frenchman.

ARCHER. Alas, sir! Necessity has no law. The lady may be in distress; perhaps she has a confounded husband, and her revenge may carry her farther than her love. I gad, I have so good an opinion of her, and of myself, that I begin to fancy strange things: and we must say this for the honor of our women—and, indeed, of ourselves—that they do stick to their men as they do to their *Magna Charta*. If the plot lies as I suspect, I must put on the gentleman.—But here comes the doctor—I shall be ready. *Exit*

1 London coffee-houses.
2 Custom permitted seeing one act without a fee.

Enter FOIGARD

FOIGARD. Sauve you, noble friend.

AIMWELL. O sir, your servant! Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

FOIGARD. Fat naam is upon me? My naam is Foigard, joy.

AIMWELL. Foigard! a very good name for a clergyman. Pray, Doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

FOIGARD. Ireland! no, joy. Fat sort of plaace is dat saam Ireland? Dey say de people are catcht dere when dey are young.

AIMWELL. And some of 'em when they're old—as for example.—(*Takes* FOIGARD *by the shoulder*) Sir, I arrest you as a traitor against the government; you're a subject of England, and this morning showed me a commission by which you served as chaplain in the French army. This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for't.

FOIGARD. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news you tell me! Fader Foigard a subject of England! De son of a burgomaster of Brussels, a subject of England! ubooboo—

AIMWELL. The son of a bog-trotter in Ireland! Sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

FOIGARD. And is my tongue all your evidensh, joy?

AIMWELL. That's enough.

FOIGARD. No, no, joy, for I vill never spake English no more.

AIMWELL. Sir, I have other evidence.—Here, Martin!

Enter ARCHER

You know this fellow?

ARCHER. (*In a brogue*) Saave you, my dear cussen! How does your health?

FOIGARD. Ah! (*Aside*) Upon my shoul dere is my countryman, and his brogue will hang mine.—*Mynheer, Ick wet neat watt hey zacht, Ick universton ewe neat, sacramant!*[1]

AIMWELL. Altering your language won't do, sir; this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

[1] My lord, I know not what he says; I understand it not, on my oath.

FOIGARD. Faace! Fey, is dear a brogue upon my faash too?

ARCHER. Upon my soulvation dear ish, joy!—But cussen Mackshane, vil you not put a remembrance upon me?

FOIGARD. (*Aside*) Mackshane! by St. Paatrick, dat is naame, shure enough!

AIMWELL. I fancy, Archer, you have it.

FOIGARD. The devil hang you, joy! By fat acquaintance are you my cussen?

ARCHER. Oh, de devil hang yourshelf, joy! You know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your foster moder's son was married upon my nurse's chister, joy, and so we are Irish cussens.

FOIGARD. De devil taak the relation! Vel, joy, and fat school was it?

ARCHER. I tinks it vas—aay—'twas Tipperary.

FOIGARD. No, no, joy; it vas Kilkenny.

AIMWELL. That's enough for us—self-confession.—Come, sir, we must deliever you into the hands of the next magistrate.

ARCHER. He sends you to gaol, you're tried next assizes, and away you go swing into purgatory.

FOIGARD. And is it so wid you, cussen?

ARCHER. It vil be sho wid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confess the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsey. Look'e, sir, the gallows or the secret: take your choice.

FOIGARD. The gallows! Upon my shoul, I hate that saam gallow, for it is a diseash dat is fatal to our family. Vel, den, dere is nothing, shentlemens, but Mrs. Shullen would spaak wid the Count in her chamber at midnight, and dere is no haarm, joy, for I am to conduct the Count to the plash, myshelf.

ARCHER. As I guessed.—Have you communicated the matter to the Count?

FOIGARD. I have not sheen him since.

ARCHER. Right again! Why, then, doctor—you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the Count.

FOIGARD. Fat, my cussen to the lady! Upon my shoul, gra, dat is too much upon the brogue.

ARCHER. Come, come, doctor; consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if

you offer to squeak, we'll stop your windpipe, most certainly. We shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

AIMWELL. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affair farther.

ARCHER. Come, my dear cussen, come along. *Exeunt*

Enter BONNIFACE, HOUNSLOW, *and* BAGSHOT *at one door*, GIBBET *at the opposite*

GIBBET. Well, gentlemen, 'tis a fine night for our enterprise.

HOUNSLOW. Dark as hell.

BAGSHOT. And blows like the devil; our landlord here has showed us the window where we must break in, and tells us the plate stands in the wainscoat cupboard in the parlor.

BONNIFACE. Aye, aye, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, and cups and cans, and tumblers and tankards. There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me; it was a present to the squire from his godmother, and smells of nutmeg and toast like an East India ship.

HOUNSLOW. Then you say we must divide at the stair-head?

BONNIFACE. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is. At one end of that gallery lies my Lady Bountiful and her daughter, and at the other Mrs. Sullen. As for the squire—

GIBBET. He's safe enough; I have fairly entered him, and he's more than half seas over already. But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him now that, I gad, I was ashamed to be seen in their company.

BONNIFACE. 'Tis now twelve, as the saying is—gentlemen, you must set out at one.

GIBBET. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fixed, and I'll come to you presently.

HOUNSLOW. }
BAGSHOT. } We will.

[*Exeunt* HOUNSLOW *and* BAGSHOT]

GIBBET. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward?

BONNIFACE. A chicken, as the saying is. You'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

GIBBET. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good manners in robbing a lady; I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road. —But, my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business.—I warrant you, we shall bring off three or four thousand pound.

BONNIFACE.—In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

GIBBET. Why then, Tyburn, I defy thee! I'll get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, buy myself some pretty employment in the household, and be as snug and as honest as any courtier of 'um all.

BONNIFACE. And what think you then of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

GIBBET. Look'ee, my dear Bonny—Cherry *is the Goddess I adore*, as the song goes; but it is a maxim that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for if they should, the Lord have mercy on 'um both! *Exeunt*

ACT V

SCENE [I] *continues.* [*The Inn.*] *Knocking without*

Enter BONNIFACE

BONNIFACE. Coming! Coming!—A coach and six foaming horses at this time o' night! Some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter SIR CHARLES FREEMAN

SIR CHARLES. What, fellow! A public-house, and abed when other people sleep?

BONNIFACE. Sir, I an't abed, as the saying is.

SIR CHARLES. Is Mr. Sullen's family abed, think'e?

BONNIFACE. All but the squire himself, sir, as the saying is; he's in the house.

SIR CHARLES. What company has he?

BONNIFACE. Why, sir, there's the constable, Mr. Gage the exciseman, the hunchbacked barber, and two or three other gentlemen.

SIR CHARLES. [*Aside*] I find my sister's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter SULLEN, *drunk*

BONNIFACE. Sir, here's the squire.

SULLEN. The puppies left me asleep.—Sir—

SIR CHARLES. Well, sir?

SULLEN. Sir, I'm an unfortunate man—I have three thousand pound a year, and I can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

SIR CHARLES. That's very hard.

SULLEN. Aye, sir; and unless you have pity upon me and smoke one pipe with me, I must e'en go home to my wife—and I had rather go to the devil by half.

SIR CHARLES. But I presume, sir, you won't see your wife to-night; she'll be gone to bed. You don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle?

SULLEN. What! not lie with my wife? Why, sir, do you take me for an atheist or a rake?

SIR CHARLES. If you hate her, sir, I think you had better lie from her.

SULLEN. I think so too, friend. But I'm a justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

SIR CHARLES. Law! As I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

SULLEN. But if the law orders me to send you to gaol, you must lie there, my friend.

SIR CHARLES. Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

SULLEN. A crime! Oons, an't I married?

SIR CHARLES. Nay, sir, if you call marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

SULLEN. Eh? I must be acquainted with you, sir.—But, sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

SIR CHARLES. Truth, sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that dare wade deep enough to find out the bottom on't. Besides, sir, I'm afraid the line of your understanding mayn't be long enough.

SULLEN. Look'e, sir; I have nothing to say to your sea of truth, but if a good parcel of land can entitle a man to a little truth, I have as much as any he in the country.

BONNIFACE. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

SULLEN. Because I never met with a man that I liked before.

BONNIFACE. Pray, sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question: are not man and wife one flesh?

SIR CHARLES. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because ye are nothing else; but rational creatures have minds that must be united.

SULLEN. Minds!

SIR CHARLES. Aye, minds, sir; don't you think that the mind takes place of the body?

SULLEN. In some people.

SIR CHARLES. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of his servant.

SULLEN. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow!—Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

SIR CHARLES. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, kiss one another, help one another in all the actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

SULLEN. Then 'tis plain that we are two.

SIR CHARLES. Why don't you part with her, sir?

SULLEN. Will you take her, sir?

SIR CHARLES. With all my heart.

SULLEN. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison-pasty into the bargain.

SIR CHARLES. You'll let me have her fortune too?

SULLEN. Fortune! Why, sir, I have no quarrel at her fortune: I only hate the woman, sir, and none but the woman shall go.

SIR CHARLES. But her fortune, sir—

SULLEN. Can you play at whisk, sir?

SIR CHARLES. No, truly, sir.

SULLEN. Nor at all-fours[1]?

[1] high-low-jack and the game.

SIR CHARLES. Neither.

SULLEN. (*Aside*) Oons! where was this man bred?—Burn me, sir! I can't go home; 'tis but two a clock.

SIR CHARLES. For half an hour, sir, if you please—But you must consider, 'tis late.

SULLEN. Late! that's the reason I can't go to bed.—Come, sir! *Exeunt*

Enter CHERRY, *runs across the stage, and knocks at* AIMWELL's *chamber-door. Enter* AIMWELL *in his night-cap and gown*

AIMWELL. What's the matter? You tremble, child; you're frighted.

CHERRY. No wonder, sir—But in short, sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my Lady Bountiful's house.

AIMWELL. How!

CHERRY. I dogged 'em to the very door, and left 'em breaking in.

AIMWELL. Have you alarmed anybody else with the news?

CHERRY. No, no, sir, I wanted to have discovered the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man Martin; but I have searched the whole house, and can't find him. Where is he?

AIMWELL. No matter, child; will you guide me immediately to the house?

CHERRY. With all my heart, sir; my Lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Mrs. Dorinda so well—

AIMWELL. Dorinda! The name inspires me: the glory and the danger shall be all my own.—Come, my life,[1] let me but get my sword. *Exeunt*

SCENE [II] *changes to a bed-chamber in* LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *house*

Enter MRS. SULLEN [*and*] DORINDA, *undressed; a table and lights*

DORINDA. 'Tis very late, sister. No news of your spouse yet?

MRS. SULLEN. No, I'm condemned to be alone till towards four, and then perhaps I may be executed with his company.

1 Apostrophizing Dorinda.

DORINDA. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest; you'll go directly to bed, I suppose?

MRS. SULLEN. I don't know what to do.—Hey-hoe!

DORINDA. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

MRS. SULLEN. This is a languishing hour, sister.

DORINDA. And might prove a critical minute if the pretty fellow were here.

MRS. SULLEN. Here! What, in my bedchamber at two o'clock o'th' morning, I undressed, the family asleep, my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet!—O gad, sister!

DORINDA. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you.—So, my dear, good night. *Exit*

MRS. SULLEN. A good rest to my dear Dorinda!—Thoughts free! Are they so? Why, then, suppose him here, dressed like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom, (*Here* ARCHER *steals out of the closet*) with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring.—(*Turns a little o' one side and sees* ARCHER *in the posture she describes*)—Ah!—(*Shrieks, and runs to the other side of the stage*)—Have my thoughts raised a spirit?—What are you, sir—a man or a devil?

ARCHER. A man, a man, madam. (*Rising*)

MRS. SULLEN. How shall I be sure of it?

ARCHER. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute. (*Takes her hand*)

MRS. SULLEN. What, sir! do you intend to be rude?

ARCHER. Yes, madam, if you please.

MRS. SULLEN. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

ARCHER. From the skies, madam.—I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alcmena.[2]

MRS. SULLEN. How came you in?

ARCHER. I flew in at the window, madam; your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus opened the casement.

MRS. SULLEN. I'm struck dumb with admiration!

2 Whom he wooed in the form of her husband, Amphitryon.

ARCHER. And I—with wonder!

(*Looks passionately at her*)

MRS. SULLEN. What will become of me?

ARCHER. How beautiful she looks!—The teeming, jolly Spring smiles in her blooming face, and when she was conceived her mother smelt to roses, looked on lilies—

Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms,
When the warm sun thus darts into their arms.

(*Runs to her*)

MRS. SULLEN. Ah! (*Shrieks*)

ARCHER. Oons, madam, what d'ye mean? You'll raise the house.

MRS. SULLEN. Sir, I'll wake the dead before I bear this!—What! approach me with the freedoms of a keeper! I'm glad on't; your impudence has cured me.

ARCHER. If this be impudence (*Kneels*), I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious, painful voyage, e'er bowed before his saint with more devotion.

MRS. SULLEN. (*Aside*) Now, now, I'm ruined if he kneels!—Rise, thou prostrate ingineer; not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart.—Rise, and know I am a woman without my sex; I can love to all the tenderness of wishes, sighs, and tears—but go no farther.—Still, to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness even for you—but—

ARCHER. For me!

(*Going to lay hold on her*)

MRS. SULLEN. Hold, sir! build not upon that; for my most mortal hatred follows if you disobey what I command you now.—Leave me this minute.—(*Aside*) If he denies, I'm lost.

ARCHER. Then you'll promise—

MRS. SULLEN. Anything, another time.

ARCHER. When shall I come?

MRS. SULLEN. To-morrow—when you will.

ARCHER. Your lips must seal the promise.

MRS. SULLEN. Pshaw!

ARCHER. They must! they must! (*Kisses her*)—Raptures and paradise!—And why not now, my angel? The time, the place, silence, and secrecy, all conspire. And the now conscious stars have preordained this moment for my happiness.

(*Takes her in his arms*)

MRS. SULLEN. You will not! cannot, sure!

ARCHER. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joys.

MRS. SULLEN. My sex's pride assist me!

ARCHER. My sex's strength help me!

MRS. SULLEN. You shall kill me first!

ARCHER. I'll die with you.

(*Carrying her off*)

MRS. SULLEN. Thieves! Thieves! Murther!

Enter SCRUB *in his breeches, and one shoe*

SCRUB. Thieves! Thieves! Murther! Popery!

ARCHER. Ha! the very timorous stag will kill in rutting time.

(*Draws and offers to stab* SCRUB)

SCRUB. (*Kneeling*) O pray, sir, spare all I have, and take my life!

MRS. SULLEN. (*Holding* ARCHER'S *hand*) What does the fellow mean?

SCRUB. O madam, down upon your knees, your marrow-bones!—he's one of 'um.

ARCHER. Of whom?

SCRUB. One of the rogues—I beg your pardon, sir, one of the honest gentlemen that just now are broke into the house.

ARCHER. How!

MRS. SULLEN. I hope you did not come to rob me?

ARCHER. Indeed I did, madam, but I would have taken nothing but what you might ha' spared; but your crying "thieves" has waked this dreaming fool, and so he takes 'em for granted.

SCRUB. Granted! 'tis granted, sir; take all we have.

MRS. SULLEN. The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

SCRUB. Oons, madam, they're broke into the house with fire and sword! I saw them, heard them; they'll be here this minute.

ARCHER. What, thieves?

SCRUB. Under favor, sir, I think so.

MRS. SULLEN. What shall we do, sir?

ARCHER. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

MRS. SULLEN. Will you leave me?

ARCHER. Leave you! Lord, madam, did not you command me to be gone just now, upon pain of your immortal hatred?

MRS. SULLEN. Nay, but pray, sir—

(*Takes hold of him*)

ARCHER. Ha! ha! ha! now comes my turn to be ravished.—You see now, madam, you must use men one way or other; but take this by the way, good madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you'll take his love along with it.—How are they armed, friend?

SCRUB. With sword and pistol, sir.

ARCHER. Hush!—I see a dark lanthorn coming thro' the gallery.—Madam, be assured I will protect you, or lose my life.

MRS. SULLEN. Your life! No, sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore now, sir, let me entreat you to be gone.

ARCHER. No, madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem. Have you courage enough to stand the appearance of 'em?

MRS. SULLEN. Yes, yes; since I have 'scaped your hands, I can face anything.

ARCHER. Come hither, brother Scrub! Don't you know me?

SCRUB. Eh, my dear brother, let me kiss thee! (*Kisses* ARCHER)

ARCHER. This way—here—

(ARCHER *and* SCRUB *hide behind the bed*)

Enter GIBBET *with a dark lanthorn in one hand and a pistol in t'other*

GIBBET. Aye, aye, this is the chamber, and the lady alone.

MRS. SULLEN. Who are you, sir? What would you have? D'ye come to rob me?

GIBBET. Rob you! Alack a day, madam, I'm only a younger brother, madam; and so, madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you thro' the head. But don't be afraid, madam. —(*Laying his lanthorn and pistol upon the table*) These rings, madam—don't be concerned, madam, I have a profound respect for you, madam; your keys, madam—don't be frighted, madam, I'm the most of a gentleman.—(*Searching her pockets*) This necklace, madam—I never was rude to a lady;—I have a veneration—for this necklace—

(*Here* ARCHER, *having come round and seized the pistols, takes* GIBBET *by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast*)

ARCHER. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege!

GIBBET. Oh! pray, sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

ARCHER. How many is there of 'em, Scrub?

SCRUB. Five and forty, sir.

ARCHER. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

GIBBET. Hold, hold, sir! we are but three, upon my honor.

ARCHER. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him?

SCRUB. Not I, sir; kill him, kill him!

ARCHER. Run to Gipsey's chamber. There you'll find the doctor; bring him hither presently.—

Exit SCRUB, *running*

Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

GIBBET. Sir, I have no prayer at all; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

MRS. SULLEN. Pray, sir, don't kill him! You fright me as much as him.

ARCHER. The dog shall die, madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment.—Sirrah, this moment is your last.

GIBBET. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pound to spare my life.

ARCHER. Have you no more, rascal?

GIBBET. Yes, sir, I can command four hundred, but I must reserve two of 'em to save my life at the sessions.

Enter SCRUB *and* FOIGARD

ARCHER. Here, doctor, I suppose Scrub and you between you may manage him. Lay hold of him, doctor.

(FOIGARD *lays hold of* GIBBET)

GIBBET. What! turned over to the priest already?—Look ye, doctor, you come before your time; I an't condemned yet, I thank ye.

FOIGARD. Come, my dear joy, I vill secure your body and your shoul too; I vill make you a good catholic, and give you an absolution. 228

GIBBET. Absolution! Can you procure me a pardon, doctor?

FOIGARD. No, joy.

GIBBET. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil! 233

ARCHER. Convey him into the cellar; there bind him—take the pistol, and if he offers to resist, shoot him thro' the head—and come back to us with all the speed you can.

SCRUB. Aye, aye; come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him. 239

Exeunt FOIGARD *and* GIBBET, SCRUB *following*

MRS. SULLEN. But how came the doctor—

ARCHER. In short, madam—(*Shrieking without*) 'Sdeath! the rogues are at work with the other ladies—I'm vexed I parted with the pistol; but I must fly to their assistance.—Will you stay here, madam, or venture yourself with me? 247

MRS. SULLEN. O with you, dear sir, with you.

Takes him by the arm and exeunt

SCENE [III] *changes to another apartment in the same house*

Enter HOUNSLOW *dragging in* LADY BOUNTIFUL *and* BAGSHOT *haling in* DORINDA, *the rogues with swords drawn*

HOUNSLOW. Come, come, your jewels, mistress!

BAGSHOT. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman! 4

Enter AIMWELL *and* CHERRY

AIMWELL. Turn this way, villains! I durst engage an army in such a cause.

(*He engages them both*)

DORINDA. O madam, had I but a sword to help the brave man! 8

LADY BOUNTIFUL. There's three or four hanging up in the hall; but they won't draw. I'll go fetch one, however. *Exit*

Enter ARCHER *and* MRS. SULLEN

ARCHER. Hold, hold, my lord! every man his bird, pray. 13

(*They engage man to man; the rogues are thrown and disarmed*)

CHERRY. What! the rogues taken! then they'll impeach my father: I must give him timely notice. (*Runs out*)

ARCHER. Shall we kill the rogues?

AIMWELL. No, no, we'll bind them.

ARCHER. Aye, aye.—(*To* MRS. SULLEN, *who stands by him*) Here, madam, lend me your garter. 21

MRS. SULLEN. The devil's in this fellow! He fights, loves, and banters, all in a breath. —Here's a cord that the rogues brought with 'em, I suppose. 25

ARCHER. Right, right, the rogue's destiny —a rope to hang himself.—Come, my lord —this is but a scandalous sort of an office (*Binding the rogues together*), if our adventures should end in this sort of hangman-work; but I hope there is something in prospect that— 32

Enter SCRUB

Well, Scrub, have you secured your Tartar?

SCRUB. Yes, sir; I left the priest and him disputing about religion.

AIMWELL. And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy.

(*Delivers the prisoners to* Scrub, *who leads 'em out*)

MRS. SULLEN. Pray, sister, how came my lord here? 39

DORINDA. And pray, how came the gentleman here?

MRS. SULLEN. I'll tell you the greatest piece of villainy—

(*They talk in dumb show*)

AIMWELL. I fancy, Archer, you have been more successful in your adventures than the house-breakers. 46

ARCHER. No matter for my adventure, yours is the principal.—Press her this minute to marry you—now while she's hurried between the palpitation of her fear and the joy of her deliverance; now while the tide of her spirits are at high-flood.—Throw yourself at her feet, speak some romantic nonsense or other—address her like Alexander in the height of his victory, confound her senses, bear down her reason, and away with her.—The priest is now in the cellar, and dare not refuse to do the work. 58

Enter LADY BOUNTIFUL

AIMWELL. But how shall I get off without being observed?

ARCHER. You a lover, and not find a way to get off!—Let me see—

AIMWELL. You bleed, Archer. 63

ARCHER. 'Sdeath, I'm glad on't; this wound will do the business. I'll amuse the old lady and Mrs. Sullen about dressing my wound while you carry off Dorinda. 67

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Gentlemen, could we understand how you would be gratified for the services—

ARCHER. Come, come, my lady, this is no time for compliments; I'm wounded, madam. 73

LADY BOUNTIFUL. } How! wounded!
MRS. SULLEN. }

DORINDA. I hope, sir, you have received no hurt!

AIMWELL. None but what you may cure— 78

(*Makes love in dumb show*)

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Let me see your arm, sir—I must have some powder-sugar to stop the blood.—O me! an ugly gash, upon my word, sir: you must go into bed. 82

ARCHER. Aye, my lady, a bed would do very well.—Madam (*To* MRS. SULLEN), will you do me the favor to conduct me to a chamber? 86

LADY BOUNTIFUL. Do, do, daughter—while I get the lint and the probe and the plaster ready.

(*Runs out one way;* AIMWELL *carries off* DORINDA *another*)

ARCHER. Come, madam, why don't you obey your mother's commands? 91

MRS. SULLEN. How can you, after what is past, have the confidence to ask me?

ARCHER. And if you go to that, how can you, after what is past, have the confidence to deny me? Was not this blood shed in your defence and my life exposed for your protection? Look ye, madam, I'm none of your romantic fools, that fight giants and monsters for nothing; my valor is downright Swiss.[1] I'm a soldier of fortune, and must be paid. 102

MRS. SULLEN. 'Tis ungenerous in you, sir, to upbraid me with your services!

ARCHER. 'Tis ungenerous in you, madam, not to reward 'em. 106

MRS. SULLEN. How! At the expense of my honor?

ARCHER. Honor! Can honor consist with ingratitude? If you would deal like a woman of honor, do like a man of honor. D'ye think I would deny you in such a case? 112

Enter a Servant

SERVANT. Madam, my lady ordered me to tell you that your brother is below at the gate. *Exit*

MRS. SULLEN. My brother? Heavens be praised!—Sir, he shall thank you for your services; he has it in his power. 118

ARCHER. Who is your brother, madam?

MRS. SULLEN. Sir Charles Freeman.—You'll excuse me, sir; I must go and receive him. *Exit*

ARCHER. Sir Charles Freeman! 'Sdeath and hell! my old acquaintance. Now unless Aimwell has made good use of his time, all our fair machine goes souse into the sea like the Edistone. 127

SCENE [IV] *changes to the gallery in the same house*

Enter AIMWELL *and* DORINDA

DORINDA. Well, well my lord, you have conquered; your late generous action will, I hope, plead for my easy yielding; tho', I

[1] Then mercenary soldiers.

must own, your lordship had a friend in the fort before.

AIMWELL. The sweets of Hybla dwell upon her tongue!—Here, doctor—

Enter FOIGARD, *with a book*

FOIGARD. Are you prepared, boat?

DORINDA. I'm ready. But first, my lord, one word.—I have a frightful example of a hasty marriage in my own family; when I reflect upon't, it shocks me. Pray, my lord, consider a little—

AIMWELL. Consider! Do you doubt my honor or my love?

DORINDA. Neither. I do believe you equally just as brave, and were your whole sex drawn out for me to choose, I should not cast a look upon the multitude if you were absent. But, my lord, I'm a woman; colors, concealments may hide a thousand faults in me. Therefore know me better first; I hardly dare affirm I know myself in anything except my love.

AIMWELL. (*Aside*) Such goodness who could injure! I find myself unequal to the task of villain; she has gained my soul and made it honest like her own. I cannot, cannot hurt her.—Doctor, retire.

Exit FOIGARD

Madam, behold your lover and your proselyte, and judge of my passion by my conversion!—I'm all a lie, nor dare I give a fiction to your arms; I'm all counterfeit, except my passion.

DORINDA. Forbid it, Heaven! A counterfeit!

AIMWELL. I am no lord, but a poor, needy man, come with a mean, a scandalous design to prey upon your fortune. But the beauties of your mind and person have so won me from myself that, like a trusty servant, I prefer the interest of my mistress to my own.

DORINDA. Sure I have had the dream of some poor mariner, a sleepy image of a welcome port, and wake involved in storms!—Pray, sir, who are you?

AIMWELL. Brother to the man whose title I usurped, but stranger to his honor or his fortune.

DORINDA. Matchless honesty!—Once I was proud, sir, of your wealth and title, but now am prouder that you want it; now I can show my love was justly levelled and had no aim but love.—Doctor, come in.

Enter FOIGARD *at one door*, GIPSEY *at another, who whispers to* DORINDA

Your pardon, sir, we shannot want you now.—(*To* AIMWELL) Sir, you must excuse me—I'll wait on you presently.

Exit with GIPSEY

FOIGARD. Upon my shoul, now, dis is foolish. *Exit*

AIMWELL. Gone! And bid the priest depart!—It has an ominous look.

Enter ARCHER

ARCHER. Courage, Tom!—Shall I wish you joy?

AIMWELL. No.

ARCHER. Oons, man, what ha' you been doing?

AIMWELL. O Archer! my honesty, I fear, has ruined me.

ARCHER. How?

AIMWELL. I have discovered myself.

ARCHER. Discovered! and without my consent? What! have I embarked my small remains in the same bottom with yours, and you dispose of all without my partnership?

AIMWELL. O Archer! I own my fault.

ARCHER. After conviction—'tis then too late for pardon.—You may remember, Mr. Aimwell, that you proposed this folly; as you begun, so end it. Henceforth I'll hunt my fortune single—so farewell.

AIMWELL. Stay, my dear Archer, but a minute.

ARCHER. Stay? What, to be despised, exposed, and laughed at! No, I would sooner change conditions with the worst of the rogues we just now bound than bear one scornful smile from the proud knight that once I treated as my equal.

AIMWELL. What knight?

ARCHER. Sir Charles Freeman, brother to the lady that I had almost—but no matter

for that. 'Tis a cursed night's work, and so I leave you to make your best on't.

(*Going*)

AIMWELL. Freeman!—One word, Archer. Still I have hopes; methought she received my confession with pleasure.

ARCHER. 'Sdeath! who doubts it?

AIMWELL. She consented after to the match, and still I dare believe she will be just.

ARCHER. To herself, I warrant her, as you should have been.

AIMWELL. By all my hopes she comes, and smiling comes!

Enter DORINDA, *mighty gay*

DORINDA. Come, my dear lord—I fly with impatience to your arms—the minutes of my absence was a tedious year. Where's this tedious priest?

Enter FOIGARD

ARCHER. Oons, a brave girl!

DORINDA. I suppose, my lord, this gentleman is privy to our affairs?

ARCHER. Yes, yes, madam, I'm to be your father.

DORINDA. Come, priest, do your office.

ARCHER. Make haste, make haste; couple 'em any way.—(*Takes* AIMWELL's *hand*) Come, madam, I'm to give you—

DORINDA. My mind's altered; I won't.

ARCHER. Eh!

AIMWELL. I'm confounded!

FOIGARD. Upon my shoul, and sho is myshelf.

ARCHER. What's the matter now, madam?

DORINDA. Look ye, sir, one generous action deserves another. This gentleman's honor obliged him to hide nothing from me; my justice engages me to conceal nothing from him. In short, sir, you are the person that you thought you counterfeited; you are the true Lord Viscount Aimwell, and I wish your lordship joy.—Now, priest, you may be gone; if my lord is pleased now with the match, let his lordship marry me in the face of the world.

AIMWELL. } What does she mean?
ARCHER. }

DORINDA. Here's a witness for my truth.

Enter SIR CHARLES FREEMAN *and* MRS. SULLEN

SIR CHARLES. My dear Lord Aimwell, I wish you joy.

AIMWELL. Of what?

SIR CHARLES. Of your honor and estate. Your brother died the day before I left London, and all your friends have writ after you to Brussels; among the rest I did myself the honor.

ARCHER. Hark ye, sir knight, don't you banter now?

SIR CHARLES. 'Tis truth, upon my honor.

AIMWELL. Thanks to the pregnant stars that formed this accident!

ARCHER. Thanks to the womb of time that brought it forth!—away with it!

AIMWELL. Thanks to my guardian angel that led me to the prize!

(*Taking* DORINDA's *hand*)

ARCHER. And double thanks to the noble Sir Charles Freeman.—My lord, I wish you joy.—My lady, I wish you joy.—I gad, Sir Freeman, you're the honestest fellow living! —'Sdeath, I'm grown strange airy upon this matter!—My lord, how d'ye?—A word, my lord; don't you remember something of a previous agreement that entitles me to the moiety of this lady's fortune, which, I think, will amount to five thousand pound?

AIMWELL. Not a penny, Archer; you would ha' cut my throat just now because I would not deceive this lady.

ARCHER. Aye, and I'll cut your throat again if you should deceive her now.

AIMWELL. That's what I expected; and to end the dispute—the lady's fortune is ten thousand pound,—we'll divide stakes. Take the ten thousand pound or the lady.

DORINDA. How! is your lordship so indifferent?

ARCHER. No, no, no, madam! his lordship knows very well that I'll take the money. I leave you to his lordship, and so we're both provided for.

Enter COUNT BELLAIR

COUNT. Mesdames and Messieurs, I am your servant trice humble! I hear you be rob here.

AIMWELL. The ladies have been in some danger, sir.

COUNT. And, begar, our inn be rob too!

AIMWELL. Our inn! By whom?

COUNT. By the landlord, begar!—Garzoon, he has rob himself and run away!

ARCHER. Robbed himself!

COUNT. Aye, begar, and me too, of a hundred pound.

ARCHER. A hundred pound?

COUNT. Yes, that I owed him.

AIMWELL. Our money's gone, Frank.

ARCHER. Rot the money! my wench is gone.—*Savez-vous quelque chose de Mademoiselle Cherry?*

Enter a Fellow *with a strong-box and a letter*

FELLOW. Is there one Martin here?

ARCHER. Aye, aye—who wants him?

FELLOW. I have a box here and letter for him.

ARCHER. (*Taking the box*) Ha! ha! ha! what's here? Legerdemain!—By this light, my lord, our money again!—But this unfolds the riddle.—(*Opening the letter, reads*) Hum, hum, hum—Oh, 'tis for the public good, and must be communicated to the company.

[*Reads*]

Mr. Martin,

My father, being afraid of an impeachment by the rogues that are taken to-night, is gone off; but if you can procure him a pardon, he will make great discoveries that may be useful to the country. Could I have met you instead of your master to-night, I would have delivered myself into your hands, with a sum that much exceeds that in your strong box, which I have sent you, with an assurance to my dear Martin that I shall ever be his most faithful friend till death.

Cherry Bonniface

There's a billet-doux for you! As for the father, I think he ought to be encouraged; and for the daughter—pray, my lord, persuade your bride to take her into her service instead of Gipsey.

AIMWELL. I can assure you, madam, your deliverance was owing to her discovery.

DORINDA. Your command, my lord, will do without the obligation. I'll take care of her.

SIR CHARLES. This good company meets opportunely in favor of a design I have in behalf of my unfortunate sister. I intend to part her from her husband—gentlemen, will you assist me?

ARCHER. Assist you! 'Sdeath, who would not?

COUNT. Assist! Garzoon, we all assest!

Enter SULLEN

SULLEN. What's all this?—They tell me, spouse, that you had like to have been robbed.

MRS. SULLEN. Truly, spouse, I was pretty near it, had not these two gentlemen interposed.

SULLEN. How came these gentlemen here?

MRS. SULLEN. That's his way of returning thanks, you must know.

COUNT. Garzoon, the question be *a propos* for all dat.

SIR CHARLES. You promised last night, sir, that you would deliver your lady to me this morning.

SULLEN. Humph!

ARCHER. Humph! What do you mean by humph? Sir, you shall deliver her—In short, sir, we have saved you and your family; and if you are not civil, we'll unbind the rogues, join with 'um, and set fire to your house. What does the man mean? Not part with his wife!

COUNT. Aye, garzoon, de man no understan common justice.

MRS. SULLEN. Hold, gentlemen, all things here must move by consent; compulsion would spoil us. Let my dear and I talk the matter over, and you shall judge it between us.

SULLEN. Let me know first who are to be our judges.—Pray, sir, who are you?

SIR CHARLES. I am Sir Charles Freeman, come to take away your wife.

SULLEN. And you, good sir?

AIMWELL. Charles,[1] Viscount Aimwell, come to take away your sister.

SULLEN. And you, pray, sir?

ARCHER. Francis Archer, Esq., come—

SULLEN. To take away my mother, I hope. Gentlemen, you're heartily welcome; I never met with three more obliging people since I was born!—And now, my dear, if you please, you shall have the first word.

ARCHER. And the last, for five pound!

MRS. SULLEN. Spouse!

SULLEN. Rib!

MRS. SULLEN. How long have we been married?

SULLEN. By the almanac, fourteen months; but by my account, fourteen years.

MRS. SULLEN. 'Tis thereabout by my reckoning.

COUNT. Garzoon, their account will agree.

MRS. SULLEN. Pray, spouse, what did you marry for?

SULLEN. To get an heir to my estate.

SIR CHARLES. And have you succeeded?

SULLEN. No.

ARCHER. The condition fails of his side.—Pray, madam, what did you marry for?

MRS. SULLEN. To support the weakness of my sex by the strength of his, and to enjoy the pleasures of an agreeable society.

SIR CHARLES. Are your expectations answered?

MRS. SULLEN. No.

COUNT. A clear case, a clear case!

SIR CHARLES. What are the bars to your mutual contentment?

MRS. SULLEN. In the first place, I can't drink ale with him.

SULLEN. Nor can I drink tea with her.

MRS. SULLEN. I can't hunt with you.

SULLEN. Nor can I dance with you.

MRS. SULLEN. I hate cocking and racing.

SULLEN. And I abhor ombre and piquet.

MRS. SULLEN. Your silence is intolerable.

SULLEN. Your prating is worse.

MRS. SULLEN. Have we not been a perpetual offence to each other—a gnawing vulture at the heart?

SULLEN. A frightful goblin to the sight?

MRS. SULLEN. A porcupine to the feeling?

SULLEN. Perpetual wormwood to the taste?

MRS. SULLEN. Is there on earth a thing we could agree in?

SULLEN. Yes—to part.

MRS. SULLEN. With all my heart.

SULLEN. Your hand. [*Offering his*]

MRS. SULLEN. Here. [*Accepting*]

SULLEN. These hands joined us, these shall part us.—Away!

MRS. SULLEN. North.

SULLEN. South.

MRS. SULLEN. East.

SULLEN. West—far as the poles asunder.

COUNT. Begar, the ceremony be vera pretty!

SIR CHARLES. Now, Mr. Sullen, there wants only my sister's fortune to make us easy.

SULLEN. Sir Charles, you love your sister, and I love her fortune; everyone to his fancy.

ARCHER. Then you won't refund?

SULLEN. Not a stiver.

ARCHER. Then I find, madam, you must e'en go to your prison again.

COUNT. What is the portion?

SIR CHARLES. Ten thousand pound, sir.

COUNT. Garzoon, I'll pay it, and she shall go home wid me.

ARCHER. Ha! ha! ha! French all over.—Do you know, sir, what ten thousand pound English is?

COUNT. No, begar, not *justement*.

ARCHER. Why, sir, 'tis a hundred thousand livres.

COUNT. A hundre tousand livres! A garzoon! me canno' do't: your beauties and their fortunes are both too much for me.

ARCHER. Then I will.—This night's adventure has proved strangely lucky to us all—for Captain Gibbet in his walk had made bold, Mr. Sullen, with your study and escritoire, and had taken out all the writings of your estate, all the articles of marriage with

[1] Called "Tom" before hearing of his new title.

[t]his lady, bills, bonds, leases, receipts, to an infinite value: I took 'em from him, and I deliver them to Sir Charles.

(*Gives him a parcel of papers and parchments*)

SULLEN. How, my writings!—my head aches consumedly.—Well, gentlemen, you shall have her fortune, but I can't talk. If you have a mind, Sir Charles, to be merry, and celebrate my sister's wedding and my divorce, you may command my house—but my head aches consumedly.—Scrub, bring me a dram.

ARCHER. Madam (*to* MRS. SULLEN), there's a country dance to the trifle that I sung to-day; your hand, and we'll lead it up.

(*Here a dance*)

'Twould be hard to guess which of these parties is the better pleased—the couple joined, or the couple parted; the one rejoicing in hopes of an untasted happiness, and the other in their deliverance from an experienced misery.

Both happy in their several states we find,
Those parted by consent, and those conjoined.
Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee;
Consent is law enough to set you free.

FINIS

AN EPILOGUE[1]

DESIGNED TO BE SPOKE IN *THE BEAUX STRATAGEM*

If to our play your judgment can't be kind,
Let its expiring author pity find:
Survey his mournful case with melting eyes,
Nor let the bard be damned before he dies.
Forbear, you fair, on his last scene to frown,
But his true exit with a plaudit crown;
Then shall the dying poet cease to fear
The dreadful knell, while your applause he hears.
At Leuctra so the conqu'ring Theban died,
Claimed his friends' praises, but their tears denied:
Pleased in the pangs of death, he greatly thought
Conquest with loss of life but cheaply bought.
The difference this, the Greek was one would fight,
As brave, tho' not so gay, as Sergeant Kite;
Ye sons of Will's, what's that to those who write?
To Thebes alone the Grecian owed his bays;
You may the bard above the hero raise,
Since yours is greater than Athenian praise.

1 In Q1 follows the Prologue.

CATO

A Tragedy by Joseph Addison

Ecce spectaculum dignum, ad quod respiciat, intentus operi suo, Deus! Ecce par Deo dignum vir fortis cum malā fortunā compositus! Non video, inquam, quid habeat in terris Jupiter pulchrius, si convertere animum velit, quam ut spectet Catonem, jam partibus non semel fractis, nihilominus inter ruinas publicas erectum.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Cato
Lucius, a senator
Sempronius, a senator
Juba, prince of Numidia
Syphax, general of the Numidians
Portius, Marcus } sons of Cato
Decius, ambassador from Cæsar

[Senators], Mutineers, Guards, etc.

Women

Marcia, daughter to Cato
Lucia, daughter to Lucius

Scene: *A large hall in the Governor's Palace of Utica*

[Time: 46 B.C.]

PROLOGUE

By Mr. Pope

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the genius and to mend the heart,
To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold—
For this the tragic muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream through every age;
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
And foes to virtue wondered how they wept.
Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
The hero's glory, or the virgin's love;
In pitying love, we but our weakness show,
And wild ambition well deserves its woe.
Here tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause,
Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws.
He bids your breasts with ancient ardor rise,
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.
Virtue confessed in human shape he draws,
What Plato thought, and godlike Cato was:
No common object to your sight displays,
But, what with pleasure Heav'n itself surveys—
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling state!
While Cato gives his little senate laws,
What bosom beats not in his country's cause?
Who sees him act, but envies ev'ry deed?
Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
Ev'n then proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,
The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
Showed Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state.
As her dead father's rev'rend image past,
The pomp was darkened, and the day o'ercast,
The triumph ceased—tears gushed from ev'ry eye;
The world's great victor passed unheeded by.
Her last good man dejected Rome adored,
And honored Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.

Britons, attend: be worth like this approved,
And show you have the virtue to be moved.
With honest scorn the first famed Cato viewed
Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdued.
Our scene precariously subsists too long
On French translation, and Italian song.
Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage;
Be justly warmed with your own native rage.
Such plays alone should please a British ear
As Cato's self had not disdained to hear.

ACT I

Scene I

PORTIUS, MARCUS

PORTIUS. The dawn is overcast, the morning low'rs,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day,
The great, th'important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome. Our father's death
Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
Has ravaged more than half the globe, and sees
Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword:
Should he go further, numbers would be wanting
To form new battles, and support his crimes.
Ye gods, what havoc does ambition make
Among your works!

MARCUS. Thy steady temper, Portius,
Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud, and Cæsar,
In the calm lights of mild philosophy;
I'm tortured, ev'n to madness, when I think
On the proud victor: ev'ry time he's named
Pharsalia rises to my view!—I see
Th'insulting tyrant, prancing o'er the field
Strowed with Rome's citizens, and drenched in slaughter,
His horse's hoofs wet with patrician blood.
Oh, Portius! is there not some chosen curse,
Some hidden thunder in the stores of heav'n,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?

PORTIUS. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious greatness,
And mixed with too much horror to be envied.
How does the luster of our father's actions,
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,
Break out and burn with more triumphant brightness!
His suff'rings shine, and spread a glory round him;
Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
Of honor, virtue, liberty, and Rome.
His sword ne'er fell but on the guilty head;
Oppression, tyranny, and pow'r usurped,
Draw all the vengeance of his arm upon 'em.

MARCUS. Who knows not this? But what can Cato do
Against a world, a base, degenerate world,
That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?
Pent up in Utica he vainly forms
A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
And, covered with Numidian guards, directs
A feeble army, and an empty senate,
Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
By heav'ns, such virtues, joined with such success,
Distract my very soul: our father's fortune
Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

PORTIUS. Remember what our father oft has told us:
The ways of Heav'n are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in mazes, and perplexed with errors;
Our understanding traces 'em in vain,
Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search;
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.

MARCUS. These are suggestions of a mind at ease:
Oh, Portius! didst thou taste but half the griefs
That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus calmly.
Passion unpitied, and successless love,
Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate

My other griefs. Were but my Lucia kind!—
PORTIUS. (*Aside*) Thou see'st not that thy brother is thy rival;
But I must hide it, for I know thy temper.
—Now, Marcus, now, thy virtue's on the proof:
Put forth thy utmost strength, work ev'ry nerve,
And call up all thy father in thy soul;
To quell the tyrant Love, and guard thy heart
On this weak side, where most our nature fails,
Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.
MARCUS. Portius, the counsel which I cannot take,
Instead of healing but upbraids my weakness.
Bid me for honor plunge into a war
Of thickest foes, and rush on certain death;
Then shalt thou see that Marcus is not slow
To follow glory, and confess his father.
Love is not to be reasoned down, or lost
In high ambition and a thirst of greatness;
'Tis second life. It grows into the soul,
Warms ev'ry vein, and beats in ev'ry pulse.
I feel it here: my resolution melts—
PORTIUS. Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince!
With how much care he forms himself to glory,
And breaks the fierceness of his native temper
To copy out our father's bright example.
He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her;
His eyes, his looks, his actions all betray it.
But still the smothered fondness burns within him.
When most it swells and labors for a vent,
The sense of honor and desire of fame
Drive the big passion back into his heart.
What! shall an African, shall Juba's heir,
Reproach great Cato's son, and show the world
A virtue wanting in a Roman soul?
MARCUS. Portius, no more! your words leave stings behind 'em.
Whene'er did Juba, or did Portius, show
A virtue that has cast me at a distance,
And thrown me out in the pursuits of honor?
PORTIUS. Marcus, I know thy generous temper well;
Fling but the appearance of dishonor on it,
It straight takes fire, and mounts into a blaze.
MARCUS. A brother's suff'rings claim a brother's pity.
PORTIUS. Heav'n knows I pity thee: behold my eyes
Ev'n whilst I speak.—Do they not swim in tears?
Were but my heart as naked to thy view,
Marcus would see it bleed in his behalf.
MARCUS. Why then dost treat me with rebukes, instead
Of kind, condoling cares and friendly sorrow?
PORTIUS. O Marcus! did I know the way to ease
Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
Marcus, believe me, I could die to do it.
MARCUS. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of friends!
Pardon a weak, distempered soul, that swells
With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,
The sport of passions.—But Sempronius comes:
He must not find this softness hanging on me. *Exit* [MARCUS]

SCENE II

SEMPRONIUS, *solus*

SEMPRONIUS. [*Approaching*] Conspiracies no sooner should be formed
Than executed. What means Portius here?
I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart.

SEMPRONIUS, PORTIUS

—Good-morrow, Portius! Let us once embrace—
Once more embrace, whilst yet we both are free.
To-morrow should we thus express our friendship,
Each might receive a slave into his arms:
This sun perhaps, this morning sun's the last
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

PORTIUS. My father has this morning called together
To this poor hall his little Roman senate,
(The leavings of Pharsalia) to consult
If yet he can oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome and all her gods before it,
Or must at length give up the world to Cæsar.
SEMPRONIUS. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.
His virtues render our assembly awful;
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make ev'n Cæsar tremble at the head
Of armies flushed with conquest. O my Portius,
Could I but call that wondrous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be blessed indeed!
PORTIUS. Alas! Sempronius, wouldst thou talk of love
To Marcia whilst her father's life 's in danger?
Thou might'st as well court the pale, trembling vestal
When she beholds the holy flame expiring.
SEMPRONIUS. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charmed. Thou must take heed, my Portius!
The world has all its eyes on Cato's son.
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shows thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.
PORTIUS. Well dost thou seem to check my ling'ring here
On this important hour!—I'll straight away,
And while the fathers of the senate meet
In close debate to weigh th'events of war,
I'll animate the soldiers' drooping courage,
With love of freedom and contempt of life.
I'll thunder in their ears their country's cause,
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em.
'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it. *Exit* [PORTIUS]

SEMPRONIUS, *solus*. Curse on the stripling! how he apes his sire!
Ambitiously sententious!—but I wonder
Old Syphax comes not; his Numidian genius
Is well disposed to mischief, were he prompt
And eager on it; but he must be spurred,
And ev'ry moment quick'nèd to the course.
Cato has used me ill: he has refused
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows.
Besides, his baffled arms and ruined cause
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favor,
That showers down greatness on his friends, will raise me
To Rome's first honors. If I give up Cato,
I claim in my reward his captive daughter.
But Syphax comes!—

SCENE III

SYPHAX, SEMPRONIUS

SYPHAX. Sempronius, all is ready;
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,
And find 'em ripe for a revolt: they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master.
SEMPRONIUS. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste;
Ev'n whilst we speak, our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us ev'ry moment.
Alas! thou know'st not Cæsar's active soul,
With what a dreadful course he rushes on
From war to war: in vain has nature formed
Mountains and oceans to oppose his passage;
He bounds o'er all, victorious in his march.
The Alps and Pyreneans sink before him;
Through winds and waves and storms he works his way,
Impatient for the battle: one day more
Will set the victor thund'ring at our gates.
But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.
SYPHAX. Alas! he's lost,
He's lost, Sempronius; all his thoughts are full

Of Cato's virtues.—But I'll try once more
(For ev'ry instant I expect him here)
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith, of honor, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck th'infection into all his soul.
SEMPRONIUS. Be sure to press upon him ev'ry motive.
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Afric into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.
SYPHAX. But is it true, Sempronius, that your senate
Is called together? Gods! thou must be cautious!
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're covered thick with art.
SEMPRONIUS. Let me alone, good Syphax, I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion ('tis the surest way);
I'll bellow out for Rome and for my country,
And mouth at Cæsar till I shake the senate.
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,
A worn-out trick. Wouldst thou be thought in earnest?
Clothe thy feigned zeal in rage, in fire, in fury!
SYPHAX. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct grey hairs,
And teach the wily African deceit!
SEMPRONIUS. Once more, be sure to try thy skill on Juba.
Meanwhile I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and underhand
Blow up their discontents, till they break out
Unlooked for and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste:
Oh, think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots and their last fatal periods.
Oh! 'tis a dreadful interval of time,
Filled up with horror all, and big with death!
Destruction hangs on ev'ry word we speak,
On ev'ry thought, till the concluding stroke
Determines all and closes our design. *Exit*
SYPHAX, *solus*. I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth and make him spurn at Cato.
The time is short; Cæsar comes rushing on us—
But hold! young Juba sees me, and approaches.

SCENE IV

JUBA, SYPHAX

JUBA. Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone.
I have observed of late thy looks are fall'n,
O'ercast with gloomy cares and discontent;
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,
And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy prince?
SYPHAX. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face
When discontent sits heavy at my heart.
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.
JUBA. Why dost thou cast out such ungen'rous terms
Against the lords and sov'reigns of the world?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before 'em,
And own the force of their superior virtue?
Is there a nation in the wilds of Afric,
Amidst our barren rocks and burning sands,
That does not tremble at the Roman name?
SYPHAX. Gods! where's the worth that sets this people up
Above your own Numidia's tawny sons!
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow?
Or flies the javelin swifter to its mark,
Launched from the vigor of a Roman arm?
Who like our active African instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand?
Or guides in troops th'embattled elephant,
Loaden with war? These, these are arts, my prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.
JUBA. These all are virtues of a meaner rank,
Perfections that are placed in bones and nerves.

A Roman soul is bent on higher views:
To civilize the rude, unpolished world,
And lay it under the restraint of laws;
To make man mild and sociable to man;
To cultivate the wild, licentious savage
With wisdom, discipline, and lib'ral arts—
The embellishments of life. Virtues like these
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.
SYPHAX. Patience, kind heav'ns!—excuse an old man's warmth.
What are these wond'rous civilizing arts,
This Roman polish, and this smooth behavior,
That render man thus tractable and tame?
Are they not only to disguise our passions,
To set our looks at variance with our thoughts,
To check the starts and sallies of the soul,
And break off all its commerce with the tongue;
In short, to change us into other creatures
Than what our nature and the gods designed us?
JUBA. To strike thee dumb, turn up thy eyes to Cato!
There may'st thou see to what a godlike height
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man.
While good and just and anxious for his friends,
He's still severely bent against himself;
Renouncing sleep and rest and food and ease,
He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat;
And when his fortune sets before him all
The pomps and pleasures that his soul can wish,
His rigid virtue will accept of none.
SYPHAX. Believe me, prince, there's not an African
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
But better practises these boasted virtues.
Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase;
Amidst the running stream he slakes his thirst,
Toils all the day, and at th'approach of night
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn;
Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,
And if the following day he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.
JUBA. Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern
What virtues grow from ignorance and choice,
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
But grant that others could with equal glory
Look down on pleasures and the baits of sense;
Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,
Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato?
Heav'ns, with what strength, what steadiness of mind,
He triumphs in the midst of all his sufferings!
How does he rise against a load of woes,
And thank the gods that throw the weight upon him!
SYPHAX. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of soul:
I think the Romans call it stoicism.
Had not your royal father thought so highly
Of Roman virtue and of Cato's cause,
He had not fall'n by a slave's hand, inglorious,
Nor would his slaughtered army now have lain
On Afric's sands, disfigured with their wounds,
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.
JUBA. Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?
My father's name brings tears into my eyes.
SYPHAX. Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills!
JUBA. What wouldst thou have me do?
SYPHAX. Abandon Cato.
JUBA. Syphax, I should be more than twice an orphan
By such a loss.
SYPHAX. Aye, there's the tie that binds you!
You long to call him father. Marcia's charms
Work in your heart unseen and plead for Cato.
No wonder you are deaf to all I say.
JUBA. Syphax, your zeal becomes importunate;

I've hitherto permitted it to rave
And talk at large; but learn to keep it in,
Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

SYPHAX. Sir, your great father never used me thus.

Alas! he's dead! but can you e'er forget
The tender sorrows, and the pangs of nature,
The fond embraces, and repeated blessings,
Which you drew from him in your last farewell?
Still must I cherish the dear, sad remembrance,
At once to torture and to please my soul.
The good old king at parting wrung my hand
(His eyes brimful of tears), then sighing cried,
"Prithee, be careful of my son!"—His grief
Swelled up so high he could not utter more.

JUBA. Alas, thy story melts away my soul.
That best of fathers! how shall I discharge
The gratitude and duty which I owe him!

SYPHAX. By laying up his counsels in your heart.

JUBA. His counsels bade me yield to thy directions:
Then, Syphax, chide me in severest terms,
Vent all thy passion, and I'll stand its shock,
Calm and unruffled as a summer sea,
When not a breath of wind flies o'er its surface.

SYPHAX. Alas, my prince, I'd guide you to your safety.

JUBA. I do believe thou would'st: but tell me how.

SYPHAX. Fly from the fate that follows Cæsar's foes.

JUBA. My father scorned to do't.

SYPHAX. —And therefore died.

JUBA. Better to die ten thousand thousand deaths
Than wound my honor.

SYPHAX. Rather say, your love.

JUBA. Syphax, I've promised to preserve my temper.
Why wilt thou urge me to confess a flame
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal?

SYPHAX. Believe me, prince, 'tis hard to conquer love,
But easy to divert and break its force:
Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
Light up another flame and put out this.
The glowing dames of Zama's royal court
Have faces flusht with more exalted charms.
The Sun that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,
Works up more fire and color in their cheeks:
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget
The pale, unripened beauties of the north.

JUBA. 'Tis not a set of features or complexion,
The tincture of a skin, that I admire.
Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,
Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.
The virtuous Marcia tow'rs above her sex:
True, she is fair (oh, how divinely fair!),
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners. Cato's soul
Shines out in everything she acts or speaks,
While winning mildness and attractive smiles
Dwell in her looks, and with becoming grace
Soften the rigor of her father's virtues.

SYPHAX. How does your tongue grow wanton in her praise!
But on my knees I beg you would consider—

Enter MARCIA *and* LUCIA, *approaching*

JUBA. Hah! Syphax, is't not she?—She moves this way,
And with her Lucia, Lucius's fair daughter.
My heart beats thick—I prithee, Syphax, leave me.

SYPHAX. [*Aside*] Ten thousand curses fasten on 'em both!
Now will this woman, with a single glance,
Undo what I've been lab'ring all this while.

Exit [SYPHAX]

SCENE V

JUBA, MARCIA, LUCIA

JUBA. Hail, charming maid! How does thy beauty smooth
The face of war, and make ev'n horror smile!
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;

I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,
And for a while forget th'approach of Cæsar.
MARCIA. I should be grieved, young prince, to think my presence
Unbent your thoughts and slackened 'em to arms,
While, warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.
JUBA. O Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns
And gentle wishes follow me to battle!
The thought will give new vigor to my arm,
Add strength and weight to my descending sword,
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.
MARCIA. My prayers and wishes always shall attend
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approved of by the gods and Cato.
JUBA. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
I'll gaze forever on thy godlike father,
Transplanting, one by one, into my life,
His bright perfections, till I shine like him.
MARCIA. My father never, at a time like this,
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
Such precious moments.
JUBA. Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid; I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand ranged in its just array
And dreadful pomp, then will I think on thee!
O lovely maid, then will I think on thee!
And, in the shock of charging hosts, remember
What glorious deeds should grace the man who hopes
For Marcia's love. *Exit* [JUBA]

SCENE VI

LUCIA, MARCIA

LUCIA. Marcia, you're too severe:
How could you chide the young, good-natured prince,
And drive him from you with so stern an air—
A prince that loves and dotes on you to death?
MARCIA. 'Tis therefore, Lucia, that I chide him from me.
His air, his voice, his looks, and honest soul
Speak all so movingly in his behalf,
I dare not trust myself to hear him talk.
LUCIA. Why will you fight against so sweet a passion,
And steel your heart to such a world of charms?
MARCIA. How, Lucia! wouldst thou have me sink away
In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
When ev'ry moment Cato's life's at stake?
Cæsar comes armed with terror and revenge,
And aims his thunder at my father's head.
Should not the sad occasion swallow up
My other cares, and draw them all into it?
LUCIA. Why have not I this constancy of mind—
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
Sure, Nature formed me of her softest mould,
Enfeebled all my soul with tender passions,
And sunk me ev'n below my own weak sex:
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.
MARCIA. Lucia, disburden all thy cares on me,
And let me share thy most retired distress;
Tell me who raises up this conflict in thee?
LUCIA. I need not blush to name them, when I tell thee
They're Marcia's brothers and the sons of Cato.
MARCIA. They both behold thee with their sister's eyes,
And often have revealed their passion to me.
But tell me whose address thou favor'st most?
I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.
LUCIA. Which is it Marcia wishes for?
MARCIA. For neither—
And yet for both. The youths have equal share
In Marcia's wishes, and divide their sister.
But tell me—which of them is Lucia's choice.

LUCIA. Marcia, they both are high in my esteem,
But in my love—why wilt thou make me name him?
Thou know'st it is a blind and foolish passion,
Pleased and disgusted with it knows not what—
MARCIA. O Lucia, I'm perplexed; oh, tell me which
I must hereafter call my happy brother.
LUCIA. Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame my choice?
—O Portius, thou hast stol'n away my soul!
With what a graceful tenderness he loves!
And breathes the softest, the sincerest vows!
Complacency and truth and manly sweetness
Dwell ever on his tongue and smooth his thoughts.
Marcus is over-warm; his fond complaints
Have so much earnestness and passion in them,
I hear him with a secret kind of dread,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.
MARCIA. Alas, poor youth! how canst thou throw him from thee?
Lucia, thou know'st not half the love he bears thee;
Whene'er he speaks of thee, his heart's in flames.
He sends out all his soul in ev'ry word,
And thinks and talks and looks like one transported.
Unhappy youth! how will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
I dread the consequence.
LUCIA. You seem to plead
Against your brother Portius.
MARCIA. Heav'n forbid!
Had Portius been the unsuccessful lover,
The same compassion would have fall'n on him.
LUCIA. Was ever virgin love distressed like mine!
Portius himself oft falls in tears before me,
As if he mourned his rival's ill success,
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart
Nor show which way it turns. So much he fears
The sad effects that it would have on Marcus.
MARCIA. He knows too well how easily he's fired,
And would not plunge his brother in despair,
But waits for happier times and kinder moments.
LUCIA. Alas! too late I find myself involved
In endless griefs and labyrinths of woe,
Born to afflict my Marcia's family
And sow dissension in the hearts of brothers.
Tormenting thought! it cuts into my soul.
MARCIA. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,
But to the gods permit th'event of things.
Our lives, discolored with our present woes,
May still grow white and smile with happier hours.
So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and as it runs, refines
Till, by degrees, the floating mirror shines,
Reflects each flower that on the border grows,
And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shows.

Exeunt

ACT II

SCENE I. *The senate*

[Senators, *with* SEMPRONIUS *and* LUCIUS *in the foreground*]

SEMPRONIUS. Rome still survives in this assembled senate!
Let us remember we are Cato's friends
And act like men who claim that glorious title.
LUCIUS. Cato will soon be here and open to us
Th'occasion of our meeting. (*A sound of trumpets*) Hark! he comes!
May all the guardian gods of Rome direct him!

Enter CATO

CATO. Fathers, we once again are met in council.
Cæsar's approach has summoned us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves.

How shall we treat this bold, aspiring man?
Success still follows him and backs his crimes;
Pharsalia gave him Rome; Egypt has since
Received his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands
Still smoke with blood. 'Tis time we should decree
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,
And envies us ev'n Libya's sultry deserts.
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts; are they still fixed
To hold it out and fight it to the last?
Or are your hearts subdued at length, and wrought
By time and ill success to a submission?
Sempronius, speak.

SEMPRONIUS. My voice is still for war.
Gods, can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose, slavery or death?
No, let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And, at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his thronged legions, and charge home upon him.
Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from bondage.
Rise, fathers, rise! 'tis Rome demands your help;
Rise, and revenge her slaughtered citizens,
Or share their fate! The corps[1] of half her senate
Manure the fields of Thessaly, while we
Sit here, delib'rating in cold debates,
If we should sacrifice our lives to honor
Or wear them out in servitude and chains.
Rouse up, for shame! our brothers of Pharsalia
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud—To battle!
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow,
And Scipio's ghost walks unrevenged amongst us!

[1]Long used indiscriminately for singular and plural.

CATO. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason:
True fortitude is seen in great exploits
That justice warrants and that wisdom guides;
All else is tow'ring frenzy and distraction.
Are not the lives of those who draw the sword
In Rome's defence entrusted to our care?
Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter,
Might not th'impartial world with reason say
We lavished at our deaths the blood of thousands
To grace our fall and make our ruin glorious?
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

LUCIUS. My thoughts, I must confess, are turned on peace.
Already have our quarrels filled the world
With widows and with orphans: Scythia mourns
Our guilty wars, and earth's remotest regions
Lie half unpeopled by the feuds of Rome.
'Tis time to sheathe the sword and spare mankind.
It is not Cæsar, but the gods, my fathers;
The gods declare against us, and repel
Our vain attempts. To urge the foe to battle
(Prompted by blind revenge and wild despair),
Were to refuse th'awards of Providence,
And not to rest in Heav'n's determination.
Already have we shown our love to Rome;
Now let us show submission to the gods.
We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves
But free the commonwealth; when this end fails,
Arms have no further use. Our country's cause,
That drew our swords, now wrests 'em from our hands
And bids us not delight in Roman blood
Unprofitably shed; what men could do
Is done already. Heav'n and earth will witness,
If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

SEMPRONIUS. (*Aside to* CATO) This smooth discourse and mild behavior oft

Conceal a traitor. Something whispers me
All is not right. Cato, beware of Lucius.
CATO. Let us appear nor rash nor diffident:
Immod'rate valor swells into a fault,
And fear, admitted into public councils,
Betrays like treason. Let us shun 'em both.
Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs
Are grown thus desp'rate. We have bulwarks 'round us;
Within our walls are troops inured to toil
In Afric's heats and seasoned to the sun;
Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
While there is hope, do not distrust the gods,
But wait at least till Cæsar's near approach
Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
To sue for chains and own a conqueror.
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?
No, let us draw her term of freedom out
In its full length, and spin it to the last.
So shall we gain still one day's liberty;
And let me perish, but, in Cato's judgment,
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty,
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter MARCUS

MARCUS. Fathers, this moment, as I watched the gates,
Lodged on my post, a herald is arrived
From Cæsar's camp, and with him comes old Decius,
The Roman knight; he carries in his looks
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.
CATO. By your permission, fathers, bid him enter. *Exit* MARCUS
Decius was once my friend, but other prospects
Have loosed those ties and bound him fast to Cæsar.
His message may determine our resolves.

SCENE II

DECIUS, CATO, *etc.*

DECIUS. Cæsar sends health to Cato.—
CATO. Could he send it
To Cato's slaughtered friends, it would be welcome.
Are not your orders to address the senate?
DECIUS. My business is with Cato. Cæsar sees
The straits to which you're driv'n; and, as he knows
Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.
CATO. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome:
Would he save Cato? bid him spare his country.
Tell your dictator this, and tell him Cato
Disdains a life which he has pow'r to offer.
DECIUS. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar;
Her generals and her consuls are no more,
Who checked his conquests and denied his triumphs.
Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend?
CATO. Those very reasons thou hast urged, forbid it.
DECIUS. Cato, I've orders to expostulate
And reason with you, as from friend to friend.
Think on the storm that gathers o'er your head,
And threatens ev'ry hour to burst upon it.
Still may you stand high in your country's honors;
Do but comply, and make your peace with Cæsar.
Rome will rejoice, and cast its eyes on Cato
As on the second of mankind.
CATO. No more!
I must not think of life on such conditions.
DECIUS. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,
And therefore sets this value on your life.
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.
CATO. Bid him disband his legions,
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,
Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.
DECIUS. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom—

CATO. Nay more, tho' Cato's voice was ne'er employed
To clear the guilty and to varnish crimes,
Myself will mount the rostrum in his favor,
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

DECIUS. A style like this becomes a conqueror.

CATO. Decius, a style like this becomes a Roman.

DECIUS. What is a Roman that is Cæsar's foe?

CATO. Greater than Cæsar, he's a friend to virtue.

DECIUS. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
And at the head of your own little senate;
You don't now thunder in the Capitol,
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

CATO. Let him consider that who drives us hither:
'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,
And thinned its ranks. Alas! thy dazzled eye
Beholds this man in a false, glaring light,
Which conquest and success have thrown upon him;
Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black
With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes
That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em.
I know thou look'st on me as on a wretch
Beset with ills and covered with misfortunes;
But, by the gods, I swear, millions of worlds
Should never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

DECIUS. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
For all his gen'rous cares and proffered friendship?

CATO. His cares for me are insolent and vain:
Presumptuous man! The gods take care of Cato.
Would Cæsar show the greatness of his soul,
Bid him employ his care for these my friends,
And make good use of his ill-gotten pow'r,
By sheltering men much better than himself.

DECIUS. Your high, unconquered heart makes you forget
That you're a man. You rush on your destruction.
—But I have done. When I relate hereafter
The tale of this unhappy embassy,
All Rome will be in tears. *Exit* DECIUS

SCENE III

SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS, CATO, *etc.*

SEMPRONIUS. Cato, we thank thee.
The mighty genius of immortal Rome
Speaks in thy voice; thy soul breathes liberty.
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st,
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

LUCIUS. The senate owns its gratitude to Cato,
Who with so great a soul consults its safety,
And guards our lives while he neglects his own.

SEMPRONIUS. Sempronius gives no thanks on this account.
Lucius seems fond of life; but what is life?
'Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun;
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid and has lost its relish.
Oh, could my dying hand but lodge a sword
In Cæsar's bosom and revenge my country,
By heav'ns, I could enjoy the pangs of death
And smile in agony.

LUCIUS. Others perhaps
May serve their country with as warm a zeal,
Tho' 'tis not kindled into so much rage.

SEMPRONIUS. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue
In lukewarm patriots.

CATO. Come! no more, Sempronius.
All here are friends to Rome and to each other.
Let us not weaken still the weaker side
By our divisions.

SEMPRONIUS. Cato, my resentments
Are sacrificed to Rome—I stand reproved.

CATO. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

LUCIUS. Cato, we all go into your opinion.
Cæsar's behavior has convinced the senate
We ought to hold it out till terms arrive.

SEMPRONIUS. We ought to hold it out till death; but, Cato,
My private voice is drowned amid the senate's.
CATO. Then let us rise, my friends, and strive to fill
This little interval, this pause of life,
(While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful)
With resolution, friendship, Roman brav'ry,
And all the virtues we can crowd into it;
That Heav'n may say, It ought to be prolonged.
Fathers, farewell.—The young Numidian prince
Comes forward and expects to know our counsels. *Exeunt* Senators

SCENE IV

CATO, JUBA

CATO. Juba, the Roman Senate has resolved,
Till time give better prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheathed and turn its edge on Cæsar.
JUBA. The resolution fits a Roman senate.
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
My father, when some days before his death
He ordered me to march for Utica,
(Alas! I thought not then his death so near)
Wept o'er me, pressed me in his aged arms,
And, as his griefs gave way, "My son," said he,
"Whatever fortune shall befall thy father,
Be Cato's friend; he'll train thee up to great
And virtuous deeds. Do but observe him well;
Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em."
CATO. Juba, thy father was a worthy prince,
And merited, alas! a better fate;
But Heav'n thought otherwise.
JUBA. My father's fate,
In spite of all the fortitude that shines
Before my face in Cato's great example,
Subdues my soul and fills my eyes with tears.
CATO. It is an honest sorrow and becomes thee.
JUBA. My father drew respect from foreign climes:
The kings of Afric sought him for their friend;
Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,
Behind the hidden sources of the Nile,
In distant worlds, on t'other side the sun—
Oft have their black ambassadors appeared,
Loaden with gifts, and filled the courts of Zama.
CATO. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.
JUBA. I would not boast the greatness of my father,
But point out new alliances to Cato.
Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
Th'assistance of my father's pow'rful friends?
Did they know Cato, our remotest kings
Would pour embattled multitudes about him;
Their swarthy hosts would darken all our plains,
Doubling the native horror of the war
And making death more grim.
CATO. And canst thou think
Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar?
Reduced, like Hannibal, to seek relief
From court to court, and wander up and down,
A vagabond in Afric?
JUBA. Cato, perhaps
I'm too officious, but my forward cares
Would fain preserve a life of so much value.
My heart is wounded when I see such virtue
Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.
CATO. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.
But know, young prince, that valor soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills; else would they never fall
On Heav'n's first fav'rites and the best of men.
The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues that shun the day and lie concealed
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

JUBA. I'm charmed whene'er thou talk'st! I pant for virtue,
And all my soul endeavors at perfection.
CATO. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and toil,—
Laborious virtues all? learn them from Cato.
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.
JUBA. The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,
The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.
CATO. What does Juba say?
Thy words confound me.
JUBA. I would fain retract them;
Give 'em back again. They aimed at nothing.
CATO. Tell me thy wish, young prince; make not my ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.
JUBA. Oh! they're extravagant;
Still let me hide them.
CATO. What can Juba ask
That Cato will refuse?
JUBA. I fear to name it.
Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.
CATO. What wouldst thou say?
JUBA. Cato, thou hast a daughter.
CATO. Adieu, young prince; I would not hear a word
Should lessen thee in my esteem. Remember,
The hand of fate is over us, and Heav'n
Exacts severity from all our thoughts.
It is not now a time to talk of aught
But chains or conquest, liberty or death.
Exit [CATO]

SCENE V

SYPHAX, JUBA

SYPHAX. How's this, my prince? What! covered with confusion?
You look as if yon stern philosopher
Had just now chid you.
JUBA. Syphax, I'm undone!
SYPHAX. I know it well.
JUBA. Cato thinks meanly of me.
SYPHAX. And so will all mankind.
JUBA. I've opened to him
The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.
SYPHAX. Cato's a proper person to entrust
A love-tale with!
JUBA. Oh! I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart! Was ever wretch like Juba?
SYPHAX. Alas! my prince, how are you changed of late!
I've known young Juba rise before the sun,
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts:
How did the color mount into your cheeks,
When first you roused him to the chase! I've seen you,
Ev'n in the Libyan dog-days, hunt him down,
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage
Of fangs and claws, and stooping from your horse
Rivet the panting savage to the ground.
JUBA. Prithee, no more!
SYPHAX. How would the old king smile
To see you weigh the paws, when tipped with gold,
And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!
JUBA. Syphax, this old man's talk (tho' honey flowed
In every word) would now lose all its sweetness.
Cato's displeased, and Marcia lost forever!
SYPHAX. Young prince, I yet could give you good advice.
Marcia might still be yours.
JUBA. What say'st thou, Syphax?
By heav'ns, thou turn'st me all into attention.
SYPHAX. Marcia might still be yours.
JUBA. As how, dear Syphax?
SYPHAX. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,
Mounted on steeds, unused to the restraint
Of curbs or bits, and fleeter than the winds:
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up
And bear her off.
JUBA. Can such dishonest thoughts
Rise up in man! wouldst thou seduce my youth

To do an act that would destroy my honor?
SYPHAX. Gods! I could tear my beard to hear you talk!
Honor's a fine imaginary notion
That draws in raw and unexperienced men
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.
JUBA. Wouldst thou degrade thy prince into a ruffian?
SYPHAX. The boasted ancestors of these great men
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under Heav'n, was founded on a rape.
Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Catos,
(These gods on earth) are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravished Sabines.
JUBA. Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.
SYPHAX. Indeed, my prince, you want to know the world;
You have not read mankind; your youth admires
The throws and swellings of a Roman soul,
Cato's bold flights, th'extravagance of virtue.
JUBA. If knowledge of the world makes man perfidious,
May Juba ever live in ignorance!
SYPHAX. Go, go, you're young.
JUBA. Gods! must I tamely bear
This arrogance unanswered! thou'rt a traitor
—A false old traitor.
SYPHAX. (*Aside*) I have gone too far.
JUBA. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.
SYPHAX. (*Aside*) I must appease this storm or perish in it.
—Young prince, behold these locks that are grown white
Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.
JUBA. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.
SYPHAX. Must one rash word, th'infirmity of age,
Throw down the merit of my better years?
This the reward of a whole life of service!
(*Aside*)
Curse on the boy! how steadily he hears me!
JUBA. Is it because the throne of my forefathers
Still stands unfilled, and that Numidia's crown
Hangs doubtful yet whose head it shall enclose,
Thou thus presumest to treat thy prince with scorn?
SYPHAX. Why will you rive my heart with such expressions?
Does not old Syphax follow you to war?
What are his aims? why does he load with darts
His trembling hand, and crush beneath a casque
His wrinkled brows? What is it he aspires to?
Is it not this, to shed the slow remains,
His last poor ebb of blood, in your defence?
JUBA. Syphax, no more! I would not hear you talk.
SYPHAX. Not hear me talk! what, when my faith to Juba,
My royal master's son, is called in question?
My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb:
But whilst I live, I must not hold my tongue
And languish out old age in his displeasure.
JUBA. Thou know'st the way too well into my heart;
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.
SYPHAX. What greater instance can I give? I've offered
To do an action which my soul abhors,
And gain you whom you love at any price.
JUBA. Was this thy motive? I have been too hasty.
SYPHAX. And 'tis for this my prince has called me traitor!
JUBA. Sure thou mistakest; I did not call thee so.
SYPHAX. You did indeed, my prince, you called me traitor:
Nay, further, threatened you'd complain to Cato.
Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato?

—That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice
His life, nay, more, his honor in your service?
JUBA. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me, but indeed
Thy zeal for Juba carried thee too far.
Honor's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions where she is not.
It ought not to be sported with.
SYPHAX. By heav'ns,
I'm ravished when you talk thus, tho' you chide me!
Alas! I've hitherto been used to think
A blind, officious zeal to serve my king,
The ruling principle that ought to burn
And quench all others in a subject's heart.
Happy the people who preserve their honor
By the same duties that oblige their prince!
JUBA. Syphax, thou now begin'st to speak thyself.
Numidia's grown a scorn among the nations
For breach of public vows. Our Punic faith
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb.
Syphax, we'll join our cares to purge away
Our country's crimes and clear her reputation.
SYPHAX. Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax weep
To hear you talk—but 'tis with tears of joy.
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.
JUBA. Syphax, thy hand! we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth and frowardness of age:
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person.
If e'er the scepter comes into my hand,
Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.
SYPHAX. Why will you overwhelm my age with kindness?
My joy grows burdensome; I shan't support it.
JUBA. Syphax, farewell; I'll hence, and try to find
Some blest occasion that may set me right
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers. *Exit*

SYPHAX, *solus*. Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts;
Old age is slow in both.—A false old traitor!
Those words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee,
But hence! 'tis gone! I give it to the winds.
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine—

SCENE VI

SYPHAX, SEMPRONIUS

SYPHAX. All hail, Sempronius!
Well, Cato's senate is resolved to wait
The fury of a siege before it yields.
SEMPRONIUS. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate:
Lucius declared for peace, and terms were offered
To Cato by a messenger from Cæsar.
Should they submit ere our designs are ripe,
We both must perish in the common wreck,
Lost in a gen'ral, undistinguished ruin.
SYPHAX. But how stands Cato?
SEMPRONIUS. Thou hast seen Mount Atlas:
While storms and tempests thunder on its brows,
And oceans break their billows at its feet,
It stands unmoved and glories in its height.
Such is that haughty man; his tow'ring soul,
'Midst all the shocks and injuries of fortune,
Rises superior and looks down on Cæsar.
SYPHAX. But what's this messenger?
SEMPRONIUS. I've practised with him,
And found a means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
But let me now examine in my turn;
Is Juba fixed?
SYPHAX. Yes—but it is to Cato.
I've tried the force of ev'ry reason on him—
Soothed and caressed, been angry, soothed again,
Laid safety, life, and interest in his sight—
But all are vain; he scorns them all for Cato.
SEMPRONIUS. Come, 'tis no matter; we shall do without him.

He'll make a pretty figure in a triumph,
And serve to trip before the victor's chariot.
Syphax, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.
SYPHAX. May she be thine as fast as thou wouldst have her!
SEMPRONIUS. Syphax, I love that woman; though I curse
Her and myself, yet, spite of me, I love her.
SYPHAX. Make Cato sure, and give up Utica,
Cæsar will ne'er refuse thee such a trifle.
But are thy troops prepared for a revolt?
Does the sedition catch from man to man
And run among their ranks?
SEMPRONIUS. All, all is ready.
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers.
They count their toilsome marches, long fatigues,
Unusual fastings, and will bear no more
This medley of philosophy and war.
Within an hour they'll storm the senate-house.
SYPHAX. Meanwhile I'll draw up my Numidian troops
Within the square, to exercise their arms,
And, as I see occasion, favor thee.
I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
Will look aghast, while unforeseen destruction
Pours in upon him thus from every side.
So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
Sudden, the impetuous hurricanes descend,
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
And smothered in the dusty whirlwind dies.

ACT III

SCENE I

MARCUS, PORTIUS

MARCUS. Thanks to my stars, I have not ranged about
The wilds of life ere I could find a friend.
Nature first pointed out my Portius to me,
And early taught me, by her secret force,
To love thy person ere I knew thy merit;
Till, what was instinct, grew up into friendship.
PORTIUS. Marcus, the friendships of the world are oft
Confed'racies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life.
MARCUS. Portius, thou know'st my soul in all its weakness;
Then prithee spare me on its tender side.
Indulge me but in love, my other passions
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.
PORTIUS. When love's well-timed, 'tis not a fault to love.
The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise
Sink in the soft captivity together.
I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion
(I know 'twere vain), but to suppress its force
Till better times may make it look more graceful.
MARCUS. Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt
Th'impatient throbs and longings of a soul
That pants and reaches after distant good.
A lover does not live by vulgar time:
Believe me, Portius, in my Lucia's absence
Life hangs upon me and becomes a burden;
And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
I'm ten times more undone, while hope, and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once
And with variety of pain distract me.
PORTIUS. What can thy Portius do to give thee help?
MARCUS. Portius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's presence:
Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her
With all the strength and heats of eloquence
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.
Tell her thy brother languishes to death,
And fades away, and withers in his bloom;
That he forgets his sleep, and loathes his food;
That youth, and health, and war, are joyless to him.
Describe his anxious days and restless nights,

And all the torments that thou seest me suffer.
PORTIUS. Marcus, I beg thee give me not an office
That suits with me so ill. Thou know'st my temper.
MARCUS. Wilt thou behold me sinking in my woes?
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows?
PORTIUS. Marcus, thou canst not ask what I'd refuse.
But here, believe me, I've a thousand reasons—
MARCUS. I know thou'lt say my passion's out of season;
That Cato's great example and misfortunes
Should both conspire to drive it from my thoughts.
But what's all this to one who loves like me!
Oh, Portius, Portius, from my soul I wish
Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love!
Then wouldst thou pity and assist thy brother.
PORTIUS. (*Aside*) What should I do? If I disclose my passion,
Our friendship's at an end: if I conceal it,
The world will call me false to a friend and brother.
MARCUS. But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,
Enjoys the noon-day breeze! Observe her, Portius!
That face, that shape, those eyes, that Heav'n of beauty!
Observe her well, and blame me if thou canst.
PORTIUS. She sees us and advances—
MARCUS. I'll withdraw,
And leave you for awhile. Remember, Portius,
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue.
Exit [MARCUS]

SCENE II

LUCIA, PORTIUS

LUCIA. Did not I see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place and shun my presence?
PORTIUS. O Lucia, language is too faint to show
His rage of love; it preys upon his life.
He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies:
His passions and his virtues lie confused
And mixed together in so wild a tumult,
That the whole man is quite disfigured in him.
Heav'ns! would one think 'twere possible for love
To make such ravage in a noble soul!
O Lucia, I'm distressed! my heart bleeds for him;
Ev'n now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,
A secret damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,
And I'm unhappy, tho' thou smil'st upon me.
LUCIA. How wilt thou guard thy honor in the shock
Of love and friendship! Think betimes, my Portius—
Think how the nuptial tie, that might insure
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height
Thy brother's griefs, as might perhaps destroy him.
PORTIUS. Alas, poor youth! What dost thou think, my Lucia?
His generous, open, undesigning heart
Has begged his rival to solicit for him.
Then do not strike him dead with a denial,
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul
With the faint glimm'ring of a doubtful hope:
Perhaps when we have passed these gloomy hours,
And weathered out the storm that beats upon us—
LUCIA. No, Portius, no! I see thy sister's tears,
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves.
And, Portius, here I swear, to Heav'n I swear—
To Heav'n and all the Powers that judge mankind—
Never to mix my plighted hands with thine
While such a cloud of mischiefs hangs about us,

But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts as far—as I am able.
PORTIUS. What hast thou said! I'm thunderstruck!—Recall
Those hasty words, or I am lost forever.
LUCIA. Has not the vow already passed my lips?
The gods have heard it, and 'tis sealed in Heav'n.
May all the vengeance that was ever poured
On perjured heads, o'erwhelm me if I break it!
PORTIUS. [*After a pause*] Fixed in astonishment, I gaze upon thee;
Like one just blasted by a stroke from Heav'n.
Who pants for breath, and stiffens, yet alive,
In dreadful looks—a monument of wrath!
LUCIA. At length I've acted my severest part;
I feel the woman breaking in upon me
And melt about my heart! My tears will flow.
But oh, I'll think no more! The hand of Fate
Has torn thee from me, and I must forget thee.
PORTIUS. Hard-hearted, cruel maid!
LUCIA. Oh, stop those sounds—
Those killing sounds! Why dost thou frown upon me?
My blood runs cold, my heart forgets to heave,
And life itself goes out at thy displeasure.
The gods forbid us to indulge our loves,
But oh! I cannot bear thy hate and live!
PORTIUS. Talk not of love; thou never knew'st its force.
I've been deluded, led into a dream
Of fancied bliss. O Lucia, cruel maid!
Thy dreadful vow, loaden with death, still sounds
In my stunned ears. What shall I say or do?
Quick, let us part! perdition's in thy presence,
And horror dwells about thee!—Hah, she faints!
Wretch that I am! what has my rashness done!
—Lucia, thou injured innocence! thou best
And lovely'st of thy sex! awake, my Lucia,
Or Portius rushes on his sword to join thee.
—Her imprecations reach not to the tomb;
They shut not out society in death.
—But, hah! she moves! Life wanders up and down
Through all her face and lights up every charm.
LUCIA. O Portius, was this well!—to frown on her
That lives upon thy smiles! to call in doubt
The faith of one expiring at thy feet,
That loves thee more than ever woman loved!
—What do I say? my half-recovered sense
Forgets the vow in which my soul is bound.
Destruction stands betwixt us! We must part.
PORTIUS. Name not the word! My frighted thoughts run back,
And startle into madness at the sound.
LUCIA. What wouldst thou have me do? consider well
The train of ills our love would draw behind it.
Think, Portius, think, thou seest thy dying brother
Stabbed at his heart, and all besmeared with blood,
Storming at Heav'n and thee! Thy awful sire
Sternly demands the cause, th'accursèd cause,
That robs him of his son! Poor Marcia trembles,
Then tears her hair, and frantic in her griefs
Calls out on Lucia! What could Lucia answer?
Or how stand up in such a scene of sorrow?
PORTIUS. To my confusion and eternal grief,
I must approve the sentence that destroys me.
The mist that hung about my mind clears up;
And now, athwart the terrors that thy vow
Has planted round thee, thou appear'st more fair,
More amiable, and risest in thy charms.

Lovely'st of women! Heav'n is in thy soul;
Beauty and virtue shine forever round thee,
Bright'ning each other! Thou art all divine!
LUCIA. Portius, no more! thy words shoot thro' my heart,
Melt my resolves, and turn me all to love.
Why are those tears of fondness in thy eyes?
Why heaves thy heart? Why swells thy soul with sorrow?
It softens me too much. Farewell, my Portius.
Farewell, tho' death is in the word, forever.
PORTIUS. Stay, Lucia, stay! What dost thou say?—forever?
LUCIA. Have I not sworn? If, Portius, thy success
Must throw thy brother on his fate, farewell—
Oh, how shall I repeat the word?—forever!
PORTIUS. Thus o'er the dying lamp th'unsteady flame
Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,
And falls again, as loth to quit its hold.
Thou must not go; my soul still hovers o'er thee
And can't get loose.
LUCIA. If the firm Portius shake
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers!
PORTIUS. 'Tis true; unruffled and serene I've met
The common accidents of life, but here
Such an unlooked-for storm of ills falls on me,
It beats down all my strength. I cannot bear it.
We must not part.
LUCIA. What dost thou say?—not part?
Hast thou forgot the vow that I have made?
Are there not heav'ns, and gods, and thunder o'er us?
—But see! thy brother Marcus bends this way!
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell;
Farewell, and know thou wrong'st me if thou think'st
Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine.
Exit LUCIA

SCENE III

MARCUS, PORTIUS

MARCUS. Portius, what hopes? how stands she? am I doomed
To life or death?
PORTIUS. What wouldst thou have me say?
MARCUS. What means this pensive posture? thou appear'st
Like one amazed and terrified.
PORTIUS. I've reason.
MARCUS. Thy downcast looks and thy disordered thoughts
Tell me my fate. I ask not the success
My cause has found.
PORTIUS. I'm grieved I undertook it.
MARCUS. What! does the barb'rous maid insult my heart—
My aching heart—and triumph in my pains?
That I could cast her from my thoughts forever!
PORTIUS. Away! you're too suspicious in your griefs;
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains and pities you!
MARCUS. Compassionates my pains and pities me!
What is compassion when 'tis void of love?
Fool that I was to choose so cold a friend
To urge my cause!—compassionate my pains!
Prithee what art, what rhet'ric didst thou use
To gain this mighty boon? She pities me!
To one that asks the warm return of love,
Compassion's cruelty!—'tis scorn, 'tis death—
PORTIUS. Marcus, no more! have I deserved this treatment?
MARCUS. What have I said! O Portius, O forgive me!
A soul exasp'rated in ills falls out
With ev'ry thing—its friend, its self.—But hah!
What means that shout, big with the sounds of war?
What new alarm?
PORTIUS. A second, louder yet,
Swells in the winds, and comes more full upon us.

MARCUS. Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in battle!
Lucia, thou hast undone me! thy disdain
Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me ease.
PORTIUS. Quick, let us hence; who knows if Cato's life
Stands sure? O Marcus, I am warmed; my heart
Leaps at the trumpet's voice and burns for glory. *Exeunt*

SCENE IV

SEMPRONIUS *with the leaders of the mutiny*

SEMPRONIUS. At length the winds are raised, the storm blows high;
Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up
In its full fury, and direct it right,
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.
Meanwhile I'll herd among his friends, and seem
One of the number, that whate'er arrive,
My friends and fellow soldiers may be safe.
FIRST LEADER. We all are safe; Sempronius is our friend.
Sempronius is as brave a man as Cato.
But, hark! he enters. Bear up boldly to him;
Be sure you beat him down and bind him fast.
This day will end our toils and give us rest;
Fear nothing, for Sempronius is our friend.

SCENE V

CATO, SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS, PORTIUS, MARCUS, [*and* Followers]

CATO. Where are these bold, intrepid sons of war,
That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And to their general send a brave defiance?
SEMPRONIUS. (*Aside*) Curse on their dastard souls, they stand astonished!
CATO. Perfidious men! and will you thus dishonor
Your past exploits, and sully all your wars?
Do you confess 'twas not a zeal for Rome,
Nor love of liberty, nor thirst of honor,
Drew you thus far, but hopes to share the spoil
Of conquered towns and plundered provinces?
Fired with such motives, you do well to join
With Cato's foes and follow Cæsar's banners.
Why did I scape the invenomed aspic's rage,
And all the fiery monsters of the desert,
To see this day? why could not Cato fall
Without your guilt? Behold, ungrateful men—
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,
And let the man that's injured strike the blow.
Which of you all suspects that he is wronged,
Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?
Am I distinguished from you but by toils—
Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?
Painful pre-eminence!
SEMPRONIUS. (*Aside*) By heav'ns, they droop!
Confusion to the villains! all is lost.
CATO. Have you forgotten Libya's burning waste,
Its barren rocks, parched earth, and hills of sand,
Its tainted air, and all its broods of poison?
Who was the first to explore th'untrodden path,
When life was hazarded in every step?
Or, fainting in the long, laborious march,
When on the banks of an unlooked-for stream
You sunk the river with repeated draughts,
Who was the last in all your host that thirsted?
SEMPRONIUS. If some penurious source by chance appeared
Scanty of waters, when you scooped it dry,
And offered the full helmet up to Cato,
Did he not dash th'untasted moisture from him?
Did he not lead you through the mid-day sun
And clouds of dust? did not his temples glow
In the same sultry winds and scorching heats?
CATO. Hence, worthless men! hence! and complain to Cæsar
You could not undergo the toils of war,
Nor bear the hardships that your leader bore.
LUCIUS. See, Cato, see th'unhappy men! —they weep!

Fear, and remorse, and sorrow for their crime,
Appear in every look and plead for mercy.
CATO. Learn to be honest men, give up your leaders,
And pardon shall descend on all the rest.
SEMPRONIUS. Cato, commit these wretches to my care.
First let 'em each be broken on the rack,
Then, with what life remains, impaled and left
To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake.
There let 'em hang and taint the southern wind.
The partners of their crime will learn obedience
When they look up and see their fellow-traitors
Stuck on a fork and black'ning in the sun.
LUCIUS. Sempronius, why—why wilt thou urge the fate
Of wretched men?
SEMPRONIUS. How! wouldst thou clear rebellion?
Lucius (good man) pities the poor offenders
That would imbrue their hands in Cato's blood.
CATO. Forbear, Sempronius!—See they suffer death,
But in their deaths remember they are men.
Strain not the laws to make their tortures grievous.
Lucius, the base, degenerate age requires
Severity and justice in its rigor;
This awes an impious, bold, offending world,
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,
The gods behold their punishment with pleasure,
And lay th'uplifted thunderbolt aside.
SEMPRONIUS. Cato, I execute thy will with pleasure.
CATO. Meanwhile we'll sacrifice to liberty.
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The gen'rous plan of power delivered down
From age to age, by your renowned forefathers
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood)—
Oh, let it never perish in your hands!
But piously transmit it to your children.
Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.
[*Exeunt* CATO *and his train*]

SCENE VI

SEMPRONIUS *and the leaders of the mutiny*

1ST LEADER. Sempronius, you have acted like yourself;
One would have thought you had been half in earnest.
SEMPRONIUS. Villain, stand off! Base, grovelling, worthless wretches,
Mongrels in faction, poor faint-hearted traitors!
2D LEADER. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius.
Throw off the mask; there are none here but friends.
SEMPRONIUS. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume
To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by; but if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.
[*Calls*]
Here, take these factious monsters; drag 'em forth
To sudden death.

Enter Guards

1ST LEADER. Nay, since it comes to this—
SEMPRONIUS. Despatch 'em quick, but first pluck out their tongues,
Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition. *Exeunt* Guards *with the* Leaders

SCENE VII

SYPHAX, SEMPRONIUS

SYPHAX. Our first design, my friend, has proved abortive;
Still there remains an after-game to play.

My troops are mounted; their Numidian steeds
Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert.
Let but Sempronius head us in our flight,
We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,
And hew down all that would oppose our passage.
A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.
SEMPRONIUS. Confusion! I have failed of half my purpose;
Marcia—the charming Marcia's left behind!
SYPHAX. How! will Sempronius turn a woman's slave?
SEMPRONIUS. Think not thy friend can ever feel the soft,
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.
Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,
And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion;
When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.
SYPHAX. Well said! That's spoken like thyself, Sempronius.
What hinders then but that thou find her out,
And hurry her away by manly force?
SEMPRONIUS. But how to gain admission? for access
Is giv'n to none but Juba and her brothers.
SYPHAX. Thou shalt have Juba's dress and Juba's guards;
The doors will open when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.
SEMPRONIUS. Heav'ns, what a thought is there! Marcia's my own!
How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,
When I behold her struggling in my arms,
With glowing beauty and disordered charms,
While fear and anger, with alternate grace,
Pant in her breast and vary in her face!
So Pluto, seized of Proserpine, conveyed
To hell's tremendous gloom th'affrighted maid;
There grimly smiled, pleased with the beauteous prize,
Nor envied Jove his sunshine and his skies.
[*Exeunt*]

ACT IV

SCENE I

LUCIA, MARCIA

LUCIA. Now tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul,
If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman
To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?
MARCIA. O Lucia, Lucia, might my big-swoln heart
Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow!
Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace
With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.
LUCIA. I know thou'rt doomed, alike to be belov'd
By Juba and thy father's friend, Sempronius;
But which of these has power to charm like Portius?
MARCIA. Still must I beg thee not to name Sempronius?
Lucia, I like not that loud, boist'rous man;
Juba to all the brav'ry of a hero
Adds softest love and more than female sweetness;
Juba might make the proudest of our sex,
Any of womankind but Marcia, happy.
LUCIA. And why not Marcia? Come, you strive in vain
To hide your thoughts from one who knows too well
The inward glowings of a heart in love.
MARCIA. While Cato lives, his daughter has no right
To love or hate but as his choice directs.
LUCIA. But should this father give you to Sempronius?
MARCIA. I dare not think he will: but if he should—
Why wilt thou add to all the griefs I suffer,
Imaginary ills and fancied tortures?
I hear the sound of feet! they march this way!
Let us retire, and try if we can drown
Each softer thought in sense of present danger.
When love once pleads admission to our hearts,

(In spite of all the virtue we can boast)
The woman that deliberates is lost.
Exeunt

Scene II

Sempronius, *dressed like* Juba, *with* Numidian Guards

Sempronius. The deer is lodged. I've tracked her to her covert.
Be sure you mind the word, and when I give it,
Rush in at once and seize upon your prey.
Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.
—How will the young Numidian rave, to see
His mistress lost! If aught could glad my soul
Beyond th'enjoyment of so bright a prize,
'Twould be to torture that young gay barbarian.
—But hark, what noise! Death to my hopes! 'tis he—
'Tis Juba's self! There is but one way left—
He must be murdered, and a passage cut
Through those his guards.—Hah! dastards, do you tremble!
Or act like men, or by yon azure heaven—

Enter Juba

Juba. What do I see? who's this that dare usurp
The guards and habit of Numidia's prince?
Sempronius. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
Presumptuous youth!
Juba. What can this mean?—Sempronius!
Sempronius. My sword shall answer thee. Have at thy heart! [*Both draw*]
Juba. Nay, then beware thy own—proud, barb'rous man!
(Sempronius *falls. His* Guards *surrender*)
Sempronius. Curse on my stars! am I then doomed to fall
By a boy's hand, disfigured in a vile
Numidian dress, and for a worthless woman?
—Gods, I'm distracted! This my close of life!
Oh, for a peal of thunder that would make
Earth, sea, and air, and heav'n, and Cato tremble! (*Dies*)
Juba. With what a spring his furious soul broke loose,
And left the limbs still quiv'ring on the ground!
Hence let us carry off those slaves to Cato,
That we may there at length unravel all
This dark design, this mystery of fate.
Exit Juba *with* Prisoners

Scene III

Lucia, Marcia

Lucia. Sure 'twas the clash of swords! My troubled heart
Is so cast down and sunk amidst its sorrows,
It throbs with fear and aches at every sound.
O Marcia, should thy brothers for my sake!
—I die away with horror at the thought.
Marcia. See, Lucia, see! here's blood!—here's blood and murder!
—Hah, a Numidian! heav'ns preserve the prince!
The face lies muffled up within the garment.
—But hah! death to my sight, a diadem,
And purple robes! O Gods! 'tis he, 'tis he!
Juba, the loveliest youth that ever warmed
A virgin's heart—Juba lies dead before us!
Lucia. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance
Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind;
Thou canst not put it to a greater trial.
Marcia. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my patience.
Have I not cause to rave and beat my breast,
To rend my heart with grief and run distracted?
Lucia. What can I think or say to give thee comfort?
Marcia. Talk not of comfort; 'tis for lighter ills.
Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.

Enter Juba *listening*

—I will indulge my sorrows, and give way
To all the pangs and fury of despair.

That man, that best of men, deserved it from me.

JUBA. [*Aside*] What do I hear! and was the false Sempronius

That best of men? Oh, had I fall'n like him,
And could have thus been mourned, I had been happy!

LUCIA. Here will I stand, companion in thy woes,
And help thee with my tears! When I behold
A loss like thine, I half forget my own.

MARCIA. 'Tis not in fate to ease my tortured breast.
This empty world, to me a joyless desert,
Has nothing left to make poor Marcia happy.

JUBA. I'm on the rack! Was he so near her heart?

MARCIA. Oh! he was all made up of love and charms—
Whatever maid could wish or man admire:
Delight of ev'ry eye! When he appeared,
A secret pleasure gladdened all that saw him;
But when he talked, the proudest Roman blushed
To hear his virtues, and old age grew wise.

JUBA. I shall run mad—

MARCIA. O Juba! Juba! Juba!

JUBA. What means that voice? did she not call on Juba?

MARCIA. Why do I think on what he was? he's dead!
He's dead, and never knew how much I loved him!
Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,
Amidst its agonies, remembered Marcia,
And the last words he uttered called me cruel!
Alas! he knew not, hapless youth, he knew not
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba.

JUBA. Where am I? Do I live, or am indeed
What Marcia thinks? All is Elysium round me!

MARCIA. Ye dear remains of the most loved of men!
Nor modesty nor virtue here forbid
A last embrace, while thus—

JUBA. (*Throwing himself before her*) —See, Marcia, see—
The happy Juba lives! he lives to catch
That dear embrace, and to return it too
With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

MARCIA. With pleasure and amaze, I stand transported!
Sure, 'tis a dream—dead and alive at once!
If thou art Juba, who lies there?

JUBA. A wretch,
Disguised like Juba, on a cursed design.
The tale is long, nor have I heard it out;
Thy father knows it all. I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighborhood of death,
But flew, in all the haste of love to find thee;
I found thee weeping, and confess this once
Am rapt with joy to see my Marcia's tears.

MARCIA. I've been surprised in an unguarded hour,
But must not now go back: the love that lay
Half smothered in my breast, has broke through all
Its weak restraints, and burns in its full luster.
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

JUBA. I'm lost in ecstasy! and dost thou love,
Thou charming maid?

MARCIA. And dost thou live to ask it?

JUBA. This, this is life indeed! life worth preserving!
Such life as Juba never felt till now!

MARCIA. Believe me, prince, before I thought thee dead,
I did not know myself how much I loved thee.

JUBA. Oh, fortunate mistake!

MARCIA. O happy Marcia!

JUBA. My joy! my best beloved! my only wish!
How shall I speak the transport of my soul?

MARCIA. Lucia, thy arm! oh, let me rest upon it!
The vital blood, that had forsook my heart,
Returns again in such tumultuous tides
It quite o'ercomes me. Lead to my apartment.
—O prince! I blush to think what I have said,
But fate has wrested the confession from me;

Go on, and prosper in the paths of honor;
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,
And make the gods propitious to our love.
Exeunt MARCIA *and* LUCIA

JUBA. I am so blest, I fear 'tis all a dream.
Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all
Thy past unkindness. I absolve my stars.
What tho' Numidia add her conquered towns
And provinces to swell the victor's triumph!
Juba will never at his fate repine;
Let Cæsar have the world if Marcia's mine.
Exit

SCENE IV

A march at a distance. CATO, LUCIUS

LUCIUS. I stand astonished! What, the bold Sempronius!
That still broke foremost through the crowd of patriots,
As with a hurricane of zeal transported,
And virtuous ev'n to madness—
CATO. Trust me, Lucius,
Our civil discords have produced such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surprised at nothing.
—O Lucius! I am sick of this bad world!
The daylight and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter PORTIUS

—But see where Portius comes! What means this haste?
Why are thy looks thus changed?
PORTIUS. My heart is grieved.
I bring such news as will afflict my father.
CATO. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood?
PORTIUS. Not so.
The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercised his troops, the signal giv'n,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the south gate, where Marcus holds the watch.
I saw, and called to stop him, but in vain;
He tossed his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.
CATO. Perfidious men! but haste, my son, and see
Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part.
Exit PORTIUS
—Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me.
Justice gives way to force: the conquered world
Is Cæsar's; Cato has no business in it.
LUCIUS. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,
The world will still demand her Cato's presence.
In pity to mankind, submit to Cæsar
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.
CATO. Would Lucius have me live to swell the number
Of Cæsar's slaves, or by a base submission
Give up the cause of Rome and own a tyrant?
LUCIUS. The victor never will impose on Cato
Ungen'rous terms. His enemies confess
The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.
CATO. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his country.
Such popular humanity is treason.
But see young Juba! the good youth appears
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects.
LUCIUS. Alas! poor prince! his fate deserves compassion.

Enter JUBA

JUBA. I blush, and am confounded to appear
Before thy presence, Cato.
CATO. What's thy crime?
JUBA. I'm a Numidian.
CATO. And a brave one too.
Thou hast a Roman soul.
JUBA. Hast thou not heard
Of my false countrymen?
CATO. Alas! young prince,
Falsehood and fraud shoot up in ev'ry soil,
The product of all climes. Rome has its Cæsars.
JUBA. 'Tis gen'rous thus to comfort the distressed.
CATO. 'Tis just to give applause where 'tis deserved;
Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold that, tortured in the furnace,

Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.
JUBA. What shall I answer thee? my ravished heart
O'erflows with secret joy. I'd rather gain
Thy praise, O Cato, than Numidia's empire.

[*Re-*]*enter* PORTIUS *hastily*

PORTIUS. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus—
CATO. Hah! what has he done?
Has he forsook his post? has he giv'n way?
Did he look tamely on, and let 'em pass?
PORTIUS. Scarce had I left my father but I met him
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and covered o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes
Till, obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Oppressed with multitudes he greatly fell.
CATO. I'm satisfied.
PORTIUS. Nor did he fall before
His sword had pierced through the false heart of Syphax:
Yonder he lies. I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death and bite the ground.
CATO. Thanks to the gods! my boy has done his duty.
—Portius, when I am dead, be sure thou place
His urn near mine.
PORTIUS. Long may they keep asunder.
LUCIUS. O Cato! arm thy soul with all its patience;
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches!
The citizens and senators, alarmed,
Have gathered round it and attend it weeping.
CATO. (*Meeting the corpse*) Welcome, my son! Here lay him down, my friends,
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.
How beautiful is death when earned by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? what pity is it
That we can die but once to serve our country!
Why sits this sadness on your brows, my friends?
I should have blushed if Cato's house had stood
Secure and flourished in a civil war.
—Portius, behold thy brother, and remember
Thy life is not thine own when Rome demands it.
JUBA. (*Aside*) Was ever man like this!
CATO. Alas! my friends!
Why mourn you thus? let not a private loss
Afflict your hearts. 'Tis Rome requires our tears.
The mistress of the world, the seat of empire,
The nurse of heroes, the delight of gods,
That humbled the proud tyrants of the earth
And set the nations free—Rome is no more.
O Liberty! O Virtue! O my country!
JUBA. (*Aside*) Behold that upright man! Rome fills his eyes
With tears that flowed not o'er his own dead son.
CATO. Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdued,
The sun's whole course, the day, and year, are Cæsar's.
For him the self-devoted Decii died,
The Fabii fell, and the great Scipios conquered;
Ev'n Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh! my friends!
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
The Roman empire fall'n! Oh, cursed ambition!
Fall'n into Cæsar's hands! Our great forefathers
Had left him nought to conquer but his country.
JUBA. While Cato lives, Cæsar will blush to see

Mankind enslaved, and be ashamed of empire.
CATO. Cæsar ashamed! has not he seen Pharsalia?
LUCIUS. Cato, 'tis time thou save thyself and us.
CATO. Lose not a thought on me; I'm out of danger.
Heav'n will not leave me in the victor's hand.
Cæsar shall never say, I've conquered Cato.
But, oh! my friends, your safety fills my heart
With anxious thoughts: a thousand secret terrors
Rise in my soul. How shall I save my friends!
'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee.
LUCIUS. Cæsar has mercy if we ask it of him.
CATO. Then ask it, I conjure you! let him know
Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.
Add, if you please, that I request it of him,
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunished.
—Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake.
Should I advise thee to regain Numidia,
Or seek the conqueror?—
JUBA. If I forsake thee
Whilst I have life, may Heav'n abandon Juba!
CATO. Thy virtues, prince, if I foresee aright,
Will one day make thee great; at Rome, hereafter,
'Twill be no crime to have been Cato's friend.
—Portius, draw near! My son, thou oft hast seen
Thy sire engaged in a corrupted state,
Wrestling with vice and faction: now thou seest me
Spent, overpowered, despairing of success.
Let me advise thee to retreat betimes
To thy paternal seat, the Sabine field,
Where the great Censor toiled with his own hands,
And all our frugal ancestors were bless'd
In humble virtues and a rural life.
There live retired; pray for the peace of Rome;
Content thyself to be obscurely good.
When vice prevails and impious men bear sway,
The post of honor is a private station.
PORTIUS. I hope my father does not recommend
A life to Portius that he scorns himself.
CATO. Farewell, my friends! if there be any of you
Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know, there are ships prepared by my command,
(Their sails already op'ning to the winds)
That shall convey you to the wished-for port.
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?
The conqueror draws near. Once more farewell!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet
In happier climes and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.
(*Pointing to his dead son*)
There the brave youth, with love of virtue fired,
Who greatly in his country's cause expired,
Shall know he conquered. The firm patriot there,
(Who made the welfare of mankind his care)
Tho' still by faction, vice, and fortune crossed,
Shall find the gen'rous labor was not lost.

ACT V

SCENE I

CATO, *solus, sitting in a thoughtful posture: in his hand Plato's Book on the Immortality of the Soul. A drawn sword on the table by him*

CATO. It must be so. Plato, thou reason'st well!—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?

'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heav'n itself that points out an hereafter
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, th'unbounded prospect, lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a pow'r above us
(And that there is all Nature cries aloud
Through all her works), he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in, must be happy.
But when! or where!—This world was made for Cæsar.
I'm weary of conjectures—this must end 'em. (*Laying his hand on his sword*)
Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,
The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds.
What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?
Nature, oppressed and harassed out with care,
Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favor her,
That my awakened soul may take her flight,
Renewed in all her strength and fresh with life,
An off'ring fit for Heav'n. Let guilt or fear
Disturb man's rest: Cato knows neither of 'em,
Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.

Scene II

Cato, Portius

Cato. —But hah! how's this, my son? why this intrusion?
Were not my orders that I would be private?
Why am I disobeyed?
Portius. Alas! my father!
What means this sword, this instrument of death?
Let me convey it hence!
Cato. Rash youth, forbear!
Portius. Oh, let the pray'rs, th'entreaties of your friends,
Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from you.
Cato. Wouldst thou betray me? wouldst thou give me up
A slave, a captive, into Cæsar's hands?
Retire, and learn obedience to a father,
Or know, young man!—
Portius. O sir! forgive your son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on him! O my father!
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so! Be not displeased,
Oh, be not angry with me whilst I weep
And in the anguish of my heart beseech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul!
Cato. (*Embracing him*) Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.
Weep not, my son. All will be well again.
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succor Cato and preserve his children.
Portius. Your words give comfort to my drooping heart.
Cato. Portius, thou may'st rely upon my conduct.
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.
But go, my son, and see if aught be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embarked,
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend them.
My soul is quite weighed down with care, and asks

The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep.
Exit [CATO]

PORTIUS. My thoughts are more at ease; my heart revives.

SCENE III

PORTIUS, MARCIA

PORTIUS. O Marcia, O my sister, still there's hope!
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all and to his country.
He is retired to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. He has despatched me hence
With orders that bespeak a mind composed
And studious for the safety of his friends.
Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers. *Exit* [PORTIUS]

MARCIA. O ye immortal Powers that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose;
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams; remember all his virtues!
And show mankind that goodness is your care.

SCENE IV

LUCIA, MARCIA

LUCIA. Where is your father, Marcia? where is Cato?

MARCIA. Lucia, speak low; he is retired to rest.
Lucia, I feel a gently-dawning hope
Rise in my soul. We shall be happy still.

LUCIA. Alas! I tremble when I think on Cato;
In every view, in every thought I tremble!
Cato is stern, and awful as a god;
He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
Or pardon weakness that he never felt.

MARCIA. Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
He is all goodness, Lucia—always mild,
Compassionate, and gentle to his friends.
Fill'd with domestic tenderness, the best,
The kindest father! I have ever found him
Easy, and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

LUCIA. 'Tis his consent alone can make us blest.
Marcia, we both are equally involved
In the same intricate, perplexed distress.
The cruel hand of Fate, that has destroyed
Thy brother Marcus, whom we both lament—

MARCIA. And ever shall lament, unhappy youth!

LUCIA. Has set my soul at large, and now I stand
Loose of my vow. But who knows Cato's thoughts?
Who knows how yet he may dispose of Portius,
Or how he has determined of thyself?

MARCIA. Let him but live! commit the rest to Heav'n.

Enter LUCIUS

LUCIUS. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!
O Marcia, I have seen thy godlike father:
Some pow'r invisible supports his soul,
And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
A kind refreshing sleep is fall'n upon him;
I saw him stretched at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams. As I drew near his couch,
He smiled, and cried, "Cæsar, thou canst not hurt me."

MARCIA. His mind still labors with some dreadful thought.

LUCIUS. Lucia, why all this grief—these floods of sorrow?
Dry up thy tears, my child; we all are safe
While Cato lives—his presence will protect us.

Enter JUBA

JUBA. Lucius, the horsemen are returned from viewing
The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march.
On the high point of yon bright western tower

We ken them from afar; the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burnished helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.
LUCIUS. Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father.
Cæsar is still disposed to give us terms,
And waits at distance till he hears from Cato.

Enter PORTIUS

—Portius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance,
What tidings dost thou bring? methinks I see
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.
PORTIUS. As I was hasting to the port, where now
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the ling'ring winds, a sail arrived
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of Spain
Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights and claim her liberty.
—But, hark! what means that groan! Oh, give me way,
And let me fly into my father's presence!
[*Exit* PORTIUS]
LUCIUS. Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And in the wild disorder of his soul
Mourns o'er his country.—Hah! a second groan!—
Heaven guard us all—
MARCIA. Alas! 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps! 'tis agonizing pain—
'Tis death is in that sound—

Re-enter PORTIUS

PORTIUS. Oh, sight of woe!
O Marcia, what we feared is come to pass!
Cato is fall'n upon his sword—
LUCIUS. O Portius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest.
PORTIUS. I've raised him up,
And placed him in his chair, where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and, as his life flows from him,
Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,
Obsequious to his orders, bear him hither.
(*The back scene opens and discovers* CATO)
MARCIA. O Heav'n, assist me in this dreadful hour
To pay the last sad duties to my father.
JUBA. These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O Cæsar!
LUCIUS. Now is Rome fallen indeed!
(CATO *brought forward in his chair*)
CATO. Here set me down.
—Portius, come near me—are my friends embarked?
Can anything be thought of for their service?
Whilst I yet live, let me not live in vain.
—O Lucius, art thou here?—thou art too good!
Let this our friendship live between our children;
Make Portius happy in thy daughter Lucia.
Alas! poor man, he weeps!—Marcia, my daughter—
—Oh, bend me forward!—Juba loves thee, Marcia.
A senator of Rome, while Rome survived,
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king,
But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction;
Whoe'er is brave and virtuous, is a Roman.
—I'm sick to death—Oh, when shall I get loose
From this vain world, th'abode of guilt and sorrow!
—And yet methinks a beam of light breaks in
On my departing soul. Alas! I fear
I've been too hasty! O ye Pow'rs that search
The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
If I have done amiss, impute it not!
The best may err, but you are good, and—oh! (*Dies*)

LUCIUS. There fled the greatest soul that ever warmed
A Roman breast. O Cato! O my friend!
Thy will shall be religiously observed.
But let us bear this awful corpse to Cæsar,
And lay it in his sight, that it may stand
A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath:
Cato, tho' dead, shall still protect his friends.
From hence, let fierce contending nations know
What dire effects from civil discord flow.
'Tis this that shakes our country with alarms,
And gives up Rome a prey to Roman arms,
Produces fraud, and cruelty, and strife,
And robs the guilty world of Cato's life.

Exeunt Omnes

EPILOGUE

What odd, fantastic things we women do!
Who would not listen when young lovers woo?
But die a maid, yet have the choice of two!
Ladies are often cruel to their cost;
To give you pain, themselves they punish most.
Vows of virginity should well be weighed;
Too oft they're cancelled, tho' in convents made.
Would you revenge such rash resolves, you may;
Be spiteful and believe the thing we say;
We hate you when you're easily said nay.
How needless, if you knew us, were your fears!
Let Love have eyes, and Beauty will have ears.
Our hearts are formed as you yourselves would choose;
Too proud to ask, too humble to refuse,
We give to merit and to wealth we sell;
He sighs with most success that settles well.
The woes of wedlock with the joys we mix;
'Tis best repenting in a coach and six.
Blame not our conduct, since we but pursue
Those lively lessons we have learned from you;
Your breasts no more the fire of beauty warms,
But wicked Wealth usurps the power of charms.
What pains to get the gaudy things you hate,
To swell in show and be a wretch in state!
At plays you ogle, at the Ring you bow;
Even churches are no sanctuaries now.
There, golden idols all your vows receive;
She is no goddess that has nought to give.
Oh, may once more the happy age appear,
When words were artless and the thoughts sincere;
When gold and grandeur were unenvied things,
And courts less covetous than groves and springs.
Love then shall only mourn when Truth complains,
And Constancy feel transport in its chains;
Sighs with success their own soft anguish tell,
And eyes shall utter what the lips conceal;
Virtue again to its bright station climb,
And Beauty fear no enemy but Time;
The fair shall listen to desert alone,
And every Lucia find a Cato's son.

THE TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE

Written in Imitation of Shakespeare's Style by Nicholas Rowe

. . . Conjunx ubi pristinus illi
Respondet curis.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Duke of Gloster
Lord Hastings
Catesby
Sir Richard Ratcliffe
Bellmour
Dumont, [Shore in disguise]
[Earl of Derby]

Women

Alicia
Jane Shore

Several Lords of the Council, Guards, and Attendants

Scene: *London*

[Time: *about* 1483]

[DEDICATION]

To His Grace the Duke of Queensberry and Dover, Marquis of Beverly, &c.

My Lord,

I have long lain under the greatest obligations to Your Grace's family, and nothing has been more in my wishes than that I might be able to discharge some part, at least, of so large a debt. But your noble birth and fortune, the power, number, and goodness of those friends you have already, have placed you in such an independency on the rest of the world that the services I am able to render to Your Grace can never be advantageous, I am sure, nor[1] necessary to you in any part of your life. However, the next piece of gratitude, and the only one I am capable of, is the acknowledgment of what I owe; and as this is the most public, and indeed the only way I have of doing it, Your Grace will pardon me if I take this opportunity to let the world know the duty and honor I had for your illustrious father. It is, I must confess, a very tender point to touch upon; and at the first sight may seem an ill-chosen compliment, to renew the memory of such a loss, especially to a disposition so sweet and gentle, and to a heart so sensible of filial piety as Your Grace's has been, even from your earliest childhood. But perhaps this is one of those griefs by which the heart may be made better; and if the remembrance of his death bring heaviness along with it, the honor that is paid to his memory by all good men shall wipe away those tears, and the example of his life set before your eyes shall be of the greatest advantage to Your Grace in the conduct and future disposition of your own.

In a character so amiable as that of the Duke of Queensberry was, there can be no part so proper to begin with as that which was in him, and is in all good men, the foundation of all other virtues, either religious or civil—I mean good nature—good nature, which is friendship between man and man, good breeding in courts, charity in religion, and the true spring of all beneficence in general. This was a quality he possessed in as great a measure as any gentleman I ever had the honor to know. It was this natural sweetness of temper which made him the best man in the world to live with, in any kind of relation. It was this made him a good master to his servants, a good friend to his friends, and the tenderest father to his children. For the last, I can give no better voucher than Your Grace, and for the rest I may appeal to all that have had the honor to know him. There was a spirit and pleasure in his conversation which always enlivened the company he was in,

[1] Q1 *not.*

which, together with a certain easiness and frankness in his disposition, that did not at all derogate from the dignity of his birth and character, rendered him infinitely agreeable. And as no man had a more delicate taste of natural wit, his conversations always abounded in good humor.

For those parts of his character which related to the public, as he was a nobleman of the first rank and a minister of state, they will be best known by the great employments he passed through; all which he discharged worthily as to himself, justly to the prince who employed him, and advantageously for his country. There is no occasion to enumerate his several employments; as, Secretary of State, for Scotland in particular, for Britain in general, or Lord High Commissioner of Scotland; which last office he bore more than once, but at no time more honorably, and (as I hope) more happily, both for the present age and for posterity, than when he laid the foundation for the British Union. The constancy and address which he manifested on that occasion are still fresh in everybody's memory, and perhaps when our children shall reap those benefits from that work which some people do not foresee and hope for now, they may remember the Duke of Queensberry with that gratitude which such a piece of service done to his country deserves.

He showed upon all occasions a strict and immediate attachment to the crown, in the legal service of which no man could exert himself more dutifully nor more strenuously. And at the same time no man gave more bold and more generous evidences of the love he bore to his country. Of the latter, there can be no better proof than the share he had in the late happy revolution; nor of the former than that dutiful respect and unshaken fidelity which he preserved for her present Majesty, ev'n to his last moments.

With so many good and great qualities, it is not at all strange that he possessed so large a share as he was known to have, in the esteem of the Queen and her immediate predecessor; nor that those great princes should repose the highest confidence in him: and at the same time, what a pattern has he left behind him for the nobility in general, and for Your Grace in particular, to copy after.

Your Grace will forgive me if my zeal for your welfare and honor (which nobody has more at heart than myself) shall press you with some more than ordinary warmth to the imitation of your noble father's virtues. You have, my Lord, many great advantages which may encourage you to go on in pursuit of this reputation. It has pleased God to give you naturally that sweetness of temper which, as I have before hinted, is the foundation of all good inclinations. You have the honor to be born not only of the greatest, but of the best parents; of a gentleman generally beloved, and generally lamented; and of a lady adorned with all the virtues that enter into the character of a good wife, an admirable friend, and a most indulgent mother. The natural advantages of your mind have been cultivated by the most proper arts and manners of education; you have the care of many noble friends, and especially of an excellent uncle, to watch over you in the tenderness of your youth. You set out amongst the first of mankind, and I doubt not but your virtues will be equal to the dignity of your rank.

That I may live to see Your Grace eminent for the love of your country, for your service and duty to your prince, and in convenient time, adorned with all the honors that have ever been conferred upon your noble family; that you may be distinguished to posterity as the bravest, greatest, and best man of the age you live in, is the hearty wish, and prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, and

Most faithful, humble servant,

N. Rowe

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. WILKS

To-night, if you have brought your good old taste,
We'll treat you with a downright English feast—
A tale, which told long since in homely wise,
Hath never failed of melting gentle eyes.
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame
Because recording ballads chaunt her name;
Those venerable ancient song-enditers
Soared many a pitch above our modern writers:
They caterwauled in no romantic ditty,
Sighing for Phyllis's, or Chloe's pity.

Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,
And sung her by her Christ'an name—'twas Jane.
Our numbers may be more refined than those,
But what we've gained in verse, we've lost in prose.
Their words no shuffling, double-weaning knew,
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critic taught;
With rough, majestic force he moved the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Our humble author does his steps pursue;
He owns he had the mighty bard in view,
And in these scenes has made it more his care
To rouse the passions than to charm the ear.
Yet for those gentle beaux who love the chime,
The end of Acts still jingle into rime.
The ladies, too, he hopes, will not complain;
Here are some subjects for a softer strain—
A nymph forsaken, and a perjured swain.
What most he fears is, lest the dames should frown,
The dames of wit and pleasure about town,
To see our picture drawn unlike their own.
But lest that error should provoke to fury
The hospitable hundreds of Old Drury,
He bids me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,
She doled about the charitable pence,
Built hospitals, turned saint, and died long since.
For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,
They have their choice to let alone or take it:
Tho' few, as I conceive, will think it meet
To weep so sorely for a sin so sweet;
Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,
To rise in tragedy two ages hence.

ACT I

Scene I. *The Tower*

Enter the Duke of Gloster, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, and Catesby

Gloster. Thus far success attends upon our councils,
And each event has answered to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quelled;
Dorset is banished, and her brother Rivers
Ere this lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have with joint concurrence named me
Protector of the realm. My brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York, are lodged
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The scepter and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.
Ratcliffe. Then take 'em to you
And wear them long and worthily; you are
The last remaining male of princely York:
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em)
And therefore on your sovereignty and rule
The common-weal does her dependence make,
And leans upon your highness's able hand.
Catesby. And yet to-morrow does the council meet
To fix a day for Edward's coronation:
Who can expound this riddle?
Gloster. That can I.
Those lords are each one my approved, good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom;
And howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to bustle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no farther than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.
Catesby. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power,
Of whom I wish your highness were assured:
For me—perhaps it is my nature's fault—
I own, I doubt of his inclining, much.

GLOSTER. I guess the man at whom your words would point:
Hastings—
CATESBY. The same.
GLOSTER. He bears me great good will.
CATESBY. 'Tis true, to you, as to the Lord Protector
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service:
But were he bid to cry, "God save King Richard,"
Then tell me in what terms he would reply.
Believe me, I have proved the man and found him.
I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory,
And whither that may lead him is most plain;
Yet more—one of that stubborn sort he is
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,
They call it honor, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.
GLOSTER. And yet, this tough, impracticable heart,
Is governed by a dainty-fingered girl.
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,
And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.
RATCLIFFE. The fair Alicia,
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.
CATESBY. I fear he fails in his allegiance there;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him 'till he loathes.
GLOSTER. No more; he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS

LORD HASTINGS. Health and the happiness of many days
Attend upon your grace.
GLOSTER. My good Lord Chamberlain!
W'are much beholden to your gentle friendship.
LORD HASTINGS. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.
GLOSTER. In right good time! Speak out your pleasure freely.
LORD HASTINGS. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.
GLOSTER. Say you? of Shore?
LORD HASTINGS. Once a bright star that held her place on high:
The first and fairest of our English dames
While royal Edward held the sovereign rule.
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,
Her waning form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.
She never sees the sun but thro' her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.
GLOSTER. Marry! the times are badly changed with her
From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,
Piping and playing, minstrelsie and masquing,
Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A show of mummery without a meaning.
My brother—rest and pardon to his soul!—
Is gone to his account; for this his minion,
The revel-rout is done.—But you were speaking
Concerning her.—I have been told that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.
LORD HASTINGS. No farther, my good lord, than friendly pity
And tender-hearted charity allow.
GLOSTER. Go to! I did not mean to chide you for it.
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distressed.—On with your tale.
LORD HASTINGS. Thus is it, gracious sir, that certain officers,
Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust and lawless power
Have seized upon the lands which late she held
By grant from her great master Edward's bounty.
GLOSTER. Somewhat of this, but slightly, have I heard;
And tho' some counsellors of forward zeal,

Some of most ceremonious sanctity
And bearded wisdom, often have provoked
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her,
Yet still in kind compassion of her weakness
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless, stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.
LORD HASTINGS. Good Heav'n, who renders mercy back for mercy,
With open-handed bounty shall repay you:
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.
GLOSTER. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only;
Our farther and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong
At full redressed. But I have other news
Which much import us both, for still my fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours; our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty crests.—That for your privacy. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. *An apartment in* JANE SHORE'S *house*

Enter BELLMOUR *and* DUMONT

BELLMOUR. How she has lived, you've heard my tale already;
The rest, your own attendance in her family,
Where I have found the means this day to place you,
And nearer observation best will tell you.
See! with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
Or grief besets her head.—Save you, fair lady,
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.
JANE SHORE. My gentle neighbor! your good wishes still
Pursue my hapless fortunes. Ah! good Bellmour,
How few, like thee, enquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity;
Like thee, reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep!
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine
To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman
Whose friendly service you commended to me?
BELLMOUR. Madam! it is.
JANE SHORE. (*Aside*) A venerable aspect!
Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
And worthily becomes his silver locks;
He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience;
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.
(*To* DUMONT)
Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill,
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance
Which my poor hand and humble proof can give.
But to supply those golden vantages
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.
DUMONT. You overrate me much, and all my answer
Must be my future truth; let that speak for me
And make up my deserving.
JANE SHORE. Are you of England?
DUMONT. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth;

At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days
Than those which now my failing age affords.
JANE SHORE. Alas! at Antwerp! (*Weeping*)—Oh forgive my tears!
They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—oh grief! oh shame!—my husband.
DUMONT. I knew him well—but stay this flood of anguish;
The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows.
Three years and more are past since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,
According to our church's reverend rite,
And saw him laid in hallowed ground to rest.
JANE SHORE. Oh! that my soul had known no joy but him;
That I had lived within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him!
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a Servant

SERVANT. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.
JANE SHORE. I wish to see her.
Exit Servant
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire.
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you
Of each unhappy circumstance in which
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.
Exeunt BELLMOUR *and* DUMONT

Enter ALICIA

ALICIA. Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you thus?
Still shall these sighs heave after one another;
These trickling drops chase one another still,
As if the posting messengers of grief
Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old time come back?
JANE SHORE. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er past,
That I could wish should take its turn again.
ALICIA. And yet some of those days my friend has known;
Some of those years might pass for golden ones—
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
Whose beauty is our sovereign good, and gives us
Our reasons to rebel and power to reign—
What could we more than to behold a monarch,
Lovely, renowned, a conqueror, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?
JANE SHORE. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him,
Formed to delight, to love, and to persuade.
Impassive spirits and angelic natures
Might have been charmed—like yielding human weakness,
Stooped from their Heav'n and listened to his talking.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest and most lovely, was my curse.
ALICIA. Sure, something more than fortune joined your loves;
Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere matched so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.
JANE SHORE. Name him no more:
He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
This anguish and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me;
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,

Abandoned to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seized almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.
ALICIA. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows.
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these;
Lift up thy eyes and let 'em shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mists.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And soothe his savage temper with thy beauty.
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be moved to pity and redress thee.
JANE SHORE. My form, alas! has long forgot to please.
The scene of beauty and delight is changed:
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard Grief, lean-looking, sallow Care,
And pining Discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.
One only shadow of a hope is left me;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.
ALICIA. Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause?
But wherefore should he not? Hastings has eyes;
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty.
But yours shall charm him long.
JANE SHORE. Away, you flatterer!
Nor charge his generous meaning with a weakness
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has proved;
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures danced away:
May the remaining few know only friendship.
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart
A partner there; I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.
ALICIA. (*Embracing*) Live! live and reign forever in my bosom;
Safe and unrivalled there possess thy own;
And you, ye brightest of the stars above,
Ye saints that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow.
If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
Than ev'ry other joy the world can give,
Let poverty, deformity and shame,
Distraction and despair seize me on earth;
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.
JANE SHORE. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true;
Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee.
(*Giving a casket*)
Receive this all that I can call my own,
And let it rest unknown and safe with thee:
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.
ALICIA. My all is thine;
One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful, doubting heart be still;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the pris'ner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to Heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee;
Ev'n man—the merciless insulter man—
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,

Forget thy failings and record thy praise.
JANE SHORE. Why should I think that man will do for me
What yet he never did for wretches like me?
Mark by what partial justice we are judged;
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entailed upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove
Free and unquestioned through the wilds of love;
While woman—sense and nature's easy fool—
If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule,
If, strongly charmed, she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray;
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame.
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain look back to what she was before;
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

Exeunt

ACT II

SCENE I. *Scene continues*

Enter ALICIA, *speaking to* JANE SHORE *as entering*

ALICIA. No farther, gentle friend; good angels guard you,
And spread their gracious wings about your slumbers.
The drowsy night grows on the world, and now
The busy craftsman and the o'er-labored hind
Forget the travail of the day in sleep.
Care only wakes, and moping Pensiveness;
With meagre, discontented looks they sit,
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
Such vigils must I keep; so wakes my soul,
Restless and self-tormented! O false Hastings!
Thou hast destroyed my peace.
(*Knocking without*)
What noise is that?
What visitor is this who with bold freedom
Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest
With such a rude approach?

Enter a Servant

SERVANT. One from the court;
Lord Hastings (as I think) demands my lady.
ALICIA. Hastings! Be still my heart, and try to meet him
With his own arts—with falsehood.—But he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS. *Speaks to a* Servant *at entering*

LORD HASTINGS. Dismiss my train and wait alone without.
—Alicia here! Unfortunate encounter!
But be it as it may.
ALICIA. When humbly, thus,
The great descend to visit the afflicted;
When thus unmindful of their rest, they come
To soothe the sorrows of the midnight mourner;
Comfort comes with them, like the golden sun,
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,
And cheers the melancholy house of care.
LORD HASTINGS. 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a courtesy,
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it
To nip and blast its favor like a frost;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevailed.
The lord protector has received her suit,
And means to show her grace.
ALICIA. My friend! my lord!
LORD HASTINGS. Yes, lady, yours: none has a right more ample
To task my power than you.
ALICIA. I want the words
To pay you back a compliment so courtly;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wo' not die your debtor.
LORD HASTINGS. 'Tis well, madam.
But I would see your friend.
ALICIA. O thou false lord!

I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indifference.
But 'two'not be; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee.
LORD HASTINGS. Are you wise?
Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?
What means this raving! this transporting passion?
ALICIA. O thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant!
Dost thou behold my poor distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?
Am I not scorned, forsaken, and abandoned—
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy;
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons;
And all because my soul has doted on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable?
LORD HASTINGS. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies;
These never ceasing wailings and complainings;
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness?
ALICIA. What proof, alas! have I not given of love?
What have I not abandoned to thy arms?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame and an unblemished race,
The peace of innocence and pride of virtue?
My prodigality has giv'n thee all;
And now I have nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.
LORD HASTINGS. Why am I thus pursued from place to place,
Kept in the view, and crossed at every turn?
In vain I fly, and like a hunted deer
Scud o'er the lawns and hasten to the covert;
Ere I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the wingèd shaft deep in my heart.
ALICIA. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.
LORD HASTINGS. If you are wise and prize your peace of mind,
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy;
Let not that devil which undo's your sex,
That cursed Curiosity, seduce you,
To hunt for needless secrets which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet, but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep forever from you.
Go to!—be yet advised,—
ALICIA. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage? and bid me tamely
Sit like a poor, contented idiot down,
Nor dare to think thou hast wronged me?—
Ruin seize thee,
And swift Perdition overtake thy treachery!
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavored once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it, might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me.
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity;
Thy words and all thy actions have confessed it.
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villainy.
LORD HASTINGS. Well then, I own my heart has broke your chains.
Patient I bore the painful bondage long:
At length my generous love disdains your tyranny;
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
Vexatious days, and jarring joyless nights,
Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.
ALICIA. You triumph! do! And with gigantic pride

Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
Nor send his light'nings forth. No more his justice
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.
LORD HASTINGS. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
Be present to me now, my better angel!
Preserve me from the storm which threatens now,
And if I have beyond atonement sinned,
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
So I escape the fury of that tongue.
ALICIA. Thy pray'r is heard,—I go;—but know, proud lord,
Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness placed,
With royal favor guarded round and graced;
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;
Then like thy fate, superior will I sit,
And view thee fall'n and groveling at my feet;
See thy last breath with indignation go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below.
Exit ALICIA
LORD HASTINGS. How fierce a fiend is passion. With what wildness,
What tyranny untamed, it reigns in woman.
Unhappy sex! whose easy, yielding temper
Gives way to every appetite alike;
Each gust of inclination, uncontrolled,
Sweeps thro' their souls and sets 'em in an uproar;
Each motion of the heart rises to fury,
And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
As terrible as hate and as destructive.
So the wind roars o'er the wide 'fenceless ocean,
And heaves the billows of the boiling deep,
Alike from north, from south, from east, and west;
With equal force the tempest blows by turns
From every corner of the seaman's compass.
But soft ye now—for here comes one disclaims
Strife and her wrangling train. Of equal elements,
Without one jarring atom, was she formed,
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE

—Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Gloster has vouchsafed you hearing;
To-morrow he expects you at the court.
There plead your cause with never failing beauty;
Speak all your griefs and find a full redress.
JANE SHORE. (*Kneeling*) Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend;
Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.
LORD HASTINGS. Rise, gentle dame. You wrong my meaning much;
Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.
JANE SHORE. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speaking;
But tho' my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank you;
And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one prayer for you,
If prayers of such a wretch are heard on high,
That Heav'n will pay you back when most you need
The grace and goodness you have shown to me.
LORD HASTINGS. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there—where most 'tis due—to love;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.
JANE SHORE. Alas! my lord—

LORD HASTINGS. Why bend thy eyes to earth?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?
Why breathes that sigh, my love? And wherefore falls
This trickling show'r of tears to stain thy sweetness?
JANE SHORE. If pity dwells within your noble breast,
(As sure it does) oh, speak not to me thus!
LORD HASTINGS. Can I behold thee and not speak of love?
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses
Till my soul faints and sickens with desire.
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still?
JANE SHORE. Cast round your eyes
Upon the highborn beauties of the court;
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsullied all, and spotless.
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed,
Nor turn your eyes this way, where sin and misery,
Like loathsome weeds, have overrun the soil,
And the destroyer Shame has laid all waste.
LORD HASTINGS. What means this peevish, this fantastic change?
Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face?
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth,
That cheerful heart, which used to dance forever,
And cast a day of gladness all around thee?
JANE SHORE. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach,
And for those foolish days of wanton pride
My soul is justly humbled to the dust.
All tongues, like yours, are licensed to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.
Yet let the saints be witness to this truth,
That now, tho' late, I look with horror back;
That I detest my wretched self, and curse
My past polluted life. All-judging Heav'n,
Who knows my crimes, has seen my sorrow for them.
LORD HASTINGS. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough
To whine and mortify thyself with penance
When the decaying sense is palled with pleasure,
And weary nature tires in her last stage.
Then weep and tell thy beads, when alt'ring rheums
Have stained the lustre of thy starry eyes,
And failing palsies shake thy withered hand.
The present moments claim more generous use;
Thy beauty, night, and solitude reproach me
For having talked thus long.—Come, let me press thee, (*Laying hold on her*)
Pant on thy bosom, sink into thy arms,
And lose myself in the luxurious fold.
JANE SHORE. Never! By those chaste lights above, I swear,
My soul shall never know pollution more! (*Kneeling*)
Forbear, my lord!—Here let me rather die;
Let quick Destruction overtake me here,
And end my sorrows and my shame forever.
LORD HASTINGS. Away with this perverseness,—'tis too much— (*Striving*)
Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation.
JANE SHORE. Retire! I beg you, leave me—
LORD HASTINGS. Thus to coy it!—
With one who knows you, too.
JANE SHORE. For mercy's sake—
LORD HASTINGS. Ungrateful woman! is it thus you pay
My services?—
JANE SHORE. Abandon me to ruin
Rather than urge me—
LORD HASTINGS. (*Pulling her*) This way to your chamber;
There if you struggle—
JANE SHORE. (*Crying out*) Help! oh, gracious Heaven!
Help! Save me! Help!

Enter DUMONT; *he interposes*

DUMONT. My lord! for honor's sake—
LORD HASTINGS. Hah! What art thou?—
Begone!
DUMONT. My duty calls me
To my attendance on my mistress here.
JANE SHORE. For pity let me go!
LORD HASTINGS. Avaunt! base groom—
At distance wait and know thy office better.
DUMONT. Forego your hold, my Lord! 'tis most unmanly,
This violence—
LORD HASTINGS. Avoid the room this moment,
Or I will tread thy soul out.
DUMONT. No, my lord—
The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppressed, unhappy, helpless woman.
LORD HASTINGS. And dost thou know me? Slave!
DUMONT. Yes, thou proud lord!
I know thee well; know thee with each advantage
Which wealth, or power, or noble birth can give thee.
I know thee, too, for one who stains those honors,
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.
LORD HASTINGS. 'Tis wondrous well! I see, my saint-like dame,
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.
DUMONT. Take back the foul reproach, unmannered railer,
Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst find
I have as daring spirits in my blood
As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted.
And tho' no gaudy titles graced my birth—
Titles, the servile courtier's lean reward,
Sometimes the pay of virtue, but more oft
The hire which greatness gives to slaves and sycophants—
Yet Heav'n, that made me honest, made me more
Than ever king did when he made a lord.
LORD HASTINGS. (*Draws and strikes him*)
Insolent villain! Henceforth let this teach thee
The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.
DUMONT. Nay then, my lord, (*Drawing*) learn you by this how well
An arm resolved can guard its master's life.
(*They fight*)
JANE SHORE. Oh, my distracting fears! hold, for sweet Heav'n!
(DUMONT *disarms* LORD HASTINGS)
LORD HASTINGS. Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!
DUMONT. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference now?
Your life is in my hand, and did not honor,
The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue
(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you)
Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.
But wear your sword again, and know, a lord
Opposed against a man is but a man.
LORD HASTINGS. Curse on my failing hand!
Your better fortune
Has giv'n you vantage o'er me; but perhaps
Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance. *Exit*
JANE SHORE. Alas! what have you done!
Know you the pow'r,
The mightiness that waits upon this lord?
DUMONT. Fear not, my worthiest mistress; 'tis a cause
In which Heav'n's guard shall wait you. Oh, pursue,
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul
Which urge you on to virtue; let not danger,
Nor the encumb'ring world, make faint your purpose!
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your end with peace.
JANE SHORE. Oh, that my head were laid, my sad eyes closed,
And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest;
My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

DUMONT. Would you be happy? Leave this fatal place;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighborhood,
Where Innocence is shamed, and blushing Modesty
Is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masques of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.
JANE SHORE. Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,
Of friends and all the means of life bereft?
DUMONT. Bellmour, whose friendly care still wakes to serve you,
Has found you out a little peaceful refuge.
Far from the court and the tumultuous city,
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life.
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance, seem disposed—
No neighbors but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest.
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place
When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.
Your virtue, there, may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.
JANE SHORE. Can there be so much happiness in store!
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.
Haste then, and thither let us wing our flight,
Ere the clouds gather and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.
DUMONT. Will you then go? You glad my very soul.
Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;
Plenty, and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.
Oh, lady!—but I must not, cannot tell you
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,
And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood,
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there and wanders thro' the grove no more.
Warbling she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight.

Exeunt

ACT [III]

SCENE I. *The Court*

Enter ALICIA *with a paper*

ALICIA. This paper, to the great Protector's hand,
With care and secrecy must be conveyed;
His bold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes
And much devoted to the orphan king;
On that I build. This paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
O Jealousy! Thou bane of pleasing friendship,
Thou worst invader of our tender bosoms;
How does thy rancor poison all our softness,
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness!
—See where she comes! Once my heart's dearest blessing,
Now my changed eyes are blasted with her beauty,
Loathe that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE

JANE SHORE. Now whither shall I fly to find relief?
What charitable hand will aid me now?
Will stay my failing steps, support my ruins,

And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort?
Oh, my Alicia!
ALICIA. What new grief is this?
What unforeseen misfortune has surprised thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus?
JANE SHORE. Oh! Dumont!
ALICIA. Say! What of him?
JANE SHORE. That friendly, honest man,
Whom Bellmour brought of late to my assistance;
On whose kind cares, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn
Was seized on by the cruel hand of pow'r,
Forced from my house, and borne away to prison.
ALICIA. To prison, said you! Can you guess the cause?
JANE SHORE. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me
Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.
ALICIA. Lord Hastings! ha!
JANE SHORE. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contained;
Here, as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.
(*She gives the paper to* ALICIA, *who opens and seems to read it*)
ALICIA. (*Aside*) Now for a wile
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
Forever from my perjured Hastings' eyes.
The wanderer may then look back to me,
And turn to his forsaken home again.
(*Pulling out the other paper*)
Their fashions are the same; it cannot fail.
JANE SHORE. But see, the great Protector comes this way,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
Give me the paper, friend.
ALICIA. (*Aside*) For love and vengeance! (*She gives her the other paper*)

Enter the DUKE OF GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, Courtiers, *and other* Attendants

JANE SHORE. (*Kneeling*) O noble Gloster, turn thy gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint!
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants and save her life from perishing.
GLOSTER. (*Receiving the paper, and raising her*) Arise, fair dame, and dry your watery eyes.
Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.
Y'have got a noble friend to be your advocate;
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure;
Those once despatched, we'll call for you anon
And give your griefs redress. Go too! be comforted.
JANE SHORE. Good heavens repay your highness for this pity,
And shower down blessings on your princely head.
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load.
Exeunt JANE SHORE *and* ALICIA
GLOSTER. Now, by my hollidame!
Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock.
(*Seeming to read*)
What says her paper?
Ha! What is this? Come nearer, Ratcliffe!
—Catesby!
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning. (*He reads*)
"Wonder not, Princely Gloster, at the notice
This paper brings you from a friend unknown.

Lord Hastings is inclined to call you master,
And kneel to Richard, as to England's king;
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
And draws his service to King Edward's sons.
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
And he, and all his powers, attend on you."

RATCLIFFE. 'Tis wonderful!

CATESBY. The means by which it came
Yet stranger too!

GLOSTER. You saw it given but now.

RATCLIFFE. She could not know the purport.

GLOSTER. No, 'tis plain—
She knows it not; it levels at her life,
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
The meddling harlot! Dear she should abide it.

CATESBY. What hand soe'er it comes from, be assured,
It means your highness well—

GLOSTER. Upon the instant
Lord Hastings will be here. This morn I mean
To prove him to the quick; then if he flinch,
No more but this—away with him at once.
He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes!
Draw nearer this way and observe me well.
(*They whisper*)

Enter LORD HASTINGS

LORD HASTINGS. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
And worn to urge desire.—I must possess her;
The groom who lift his saucy hand against me,
Ere this is humbled and repents his daring.
Perhaps ev'n she may profit by th'example,
And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

GLOSTER. This do, and wait me ere the Council sits.

Exeunt RAT[CLIFFE] *and* CATESBY
—My lord, y'are well encountered; here has been
A fair petitioner this morning with us.
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her.
Alas! her gentle nature was not made
To buffet with adversity. I told her
How worthily her cause you had befriended,
How much for your good sake we meant to do,
That you had spoke and all things should be well.

LORD HASTINGS. Your highness binds me ever to your service.

GLOSTER. You know your friendship is most potent with us,
And shares our power. But of this enough,
For we have other matters for your ear.
The state is out of tune; distracting fears
And jealous doubts jar in our public councils;
Amidst the wealthy city murmurs rise,
Lewd railings and reproach on those that rule,
With open scorn of government; hence credit
And public trust 'twixt man and man are broke.
The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
Who therefore curse the great and threat rebellion.

LORD HASTINGS. The resty knaves are overrun with ease,
As plenty ever is the nurse of faction.
If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
Because the reins of power are held too slack,
And reverend authority of late
Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

GLOSTER. Beshrew my heart! but you have well divined
The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm
When the crown sits upon a baby brow?
Plainly to speak, hence comes the general cry
And sum of all complaint: 'twill ne'er be well

With England (thus they talk) while children govern.
LORD HASTINGS. 'Tis true the king is young; but what of that?
We feel no want of Edward's riper years
While Gloster's valor and most princely wisdom
So well support our infant sovereign's place—
His youth's support, and guardian of his throne.
GLOSTER. The Council (much I'm bound to thank 'em for it)
Have placed a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of pow'r, and subject to control,
Scorned by my foes, and useless to my friends.
O worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the common-weal.
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt betwixt disputed titles.
LORD HASTINGS. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this—
GLOSTER. Aye, marry, but there is—
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How on a late occasion, Doctor Shaw
Has moved the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue, by right grave authority
Of learning and religion plainly proving
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock? from thence, at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him—
LORD HASTINGS. Ill befall
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By Heav'n, 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.
Did not the king,
Our royal master Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sovereign rule should take henceforward?
When shall the deadly hate of faction cease;
When shall our long divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody malcontent
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains
Each day with some fantastic, giddy change?
GLOSTER. What if some patriot for the public good
Should vary from your scheme, new mold the state?
LORD HASTINGS. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it!
Remember him, the villain! righteous Heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance! Blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels; who for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars.
GLOSTER. You go too far, my lord.
LORD HASTINGS. Your highness's pardon—
Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth the battles;
When, like a matron butchered by her sons,
And cast beside some common way a spectacle
Of horror and affright to passers-by,
Our groaning country bled at every vein;
When murders, rapes, and massacres prevailed;
When churches, palaces, and cities blazed;
When insolence and barbarism triumphed,
And swept away distinction? Peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles. Low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation covered all the land.
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart
Whose damned ambition would renew those horrors,
And set, once more, that scene of blood before us?
GLOSTER. How now! So hot!
LORD HASTINGS. So brave, and so resolved.
GLOSTER. Is then our friendship of so little moment

That you could arm your hand against my life?
LORD HASTINGS. I hope your highness does not think I meant it;
No, Heaven forefend that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.
GLOSTER. Oh! noble Hastings! nay, I must embrace you! (*Embraces him*)
By holy Paul! y'are a right honest man;
The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise
If, when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,
And live your king and country's best support:
For me, I ask no more than honor gives—
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.
LORD HASTINGS. Accept what thanks a grateful heart should pay.
O princely Gloster! judge me not ungentle,
Of manners rude, and insolent of speech
If, when the public safety is in question,
My zeal flows warm and eager from my tongue.
GLOSTER. Enough of this: to deal in wordy compliment
Is much against the plainness of my nature.
I judge you by myself, a clear true spirit,
And as such once more join you to my bosom. [*They embrace*]
—Farewell, and be my friend.
Exit GLOSTER
LORD HASTINGS. I am not read,
Not skilled and practised in the arts of greatness,
To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
The duke is surely noble; but he touched me
Ev'n on the tend'rest point, the master-string
That makes most harmony or discord to me.
I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
And my soul's darling passion stands confessed—
Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
Beyond myself I prize my native land.
On this foundation would I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name;
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,
And die with pleasure for my country's good.
Exit

ACT IV

Scene [I] *continues:* [*the Court*]

Enter DUKE OF GLOSTER, RATCLIFFE, *and* CATESBY

GLOSTER. This was the sum of all, that he would brook
No alteration in the present state.
Marry! at last, the testy gentleman
Was almost moved to bid us bold defiance;
But there I dropped the argument, and changing
The first design and purpose of my speech,
I praised his good affection to young Edward,
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.
Proceed we then to this fore-mentioned matter
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.
RATCLIFFE. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wished
This lord had stood with us. His friends are wealthy,
Thereto, his own possessions large and mighty;
The vassals and dependants on his power
Firm in adherence, ready, bold, and many.
His name had been of 'vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.
GLOSTER. This wayward and perverse declining from us
Has warranted at full the friendly notice
Which we this morn received. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.
CATESBY. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate

And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand? Why does she live
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command?

RATCLIFFE. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your message,
Teach every grace to smile in your behalf
And her deluding eyes to gloat for you;
His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turned again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

GLOSTER. Your counsel likes me well; it shall be followed.
She waits without, attending on her suit;
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

Exeunt RATCLIFFE *and* CATESBY

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is—
A moppet made of prettiness and pride,
That oft'ner does her giddy fancies change
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colors.
Now shame upon it! Was our reason given
For such a use—to be thus puffed about
Like a dry leaf, an idle straw, a feather,
The sport of every whistling blast that blows?
Beshrew my heart, but it is wond'rous strange;
Sure, there is something more than witchcraft in them
That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have pondered
On this your grievance: and tho' some there are—
Nay, and those great ones too—who would enforce
The rigor of our power to afflict you
And bear a heavy hand, yet fear not you.
We've ta'en you to our favor; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

JANE SHORE. The blessings of a heart with anguish broken
And rescued from despair attend your highness!
Alas! my gracious lord! what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me?
If in the days of all my past offences,
When most my heart was lifted with delight,
If I withheld my morsel from the hungry,
Forgot the widows' want, and orphans' cry;
If I have known a good I have not shared,
Nor called the poor to take his portion with me,
Let my worst enemies stand forth and now
Deny the succor which I gave them not.

GLOSTER. Marry, there are, tho' I believe them not,
Who say you meddle in affairs of state—
That you presume to prattle, like a busybody,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o'th' Council
What fits the order of the common-weal.

JANE SHORE. Oh, that the busy world at least in this
Would take example from a wretch like me!
None then would waste their hours in foreign thoughts,
Forget themselves and what concerns their peace,
To tread the mazes of fantastic falsehood,
To haunt her idle sounds and flying tales
Thro' all the giddy, noisy courts of rumor:
Malicious slander never would have leisure
To search with prying eyes for faults abroad,
If all, like me, considered their own hearts,
And wept the sorrows which they found at home.

GLOSTER. Go to! I know your power, and tho' I trust not
To every breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is professed your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty; use it wisely,
And may it stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honor.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,

You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.
JANE SHORE. Oh! where or how?—Can my unworthy hand
Become an instrument of good to any?
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
To yield obedience to your dread command.
GLOSTER. Why, that's well said.—Thus then; observe me well.
The state, for many high and potent reasons,
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
For the imperial weight of England's crown—
JANE SHORE. (*Aside*) Alas! for pity.
GLOSTER. Therefore have resolved
To set aside their unavailing infancy,
And vest the sovereign rule in abler hands.
This, tho' of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.
JANE SHORE. Does he? Does Hastings?
GLOSTER. Aye, Hastings.
JANE SHORE. Reward him for the noble deed, just heavens!
For this one action guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance;
Save him from wrong, adversity and shame;
Let never-fading honors flourish round him,
And consecrate his name even to time's end;
Let him know nothing else but good on earth,
And everlasting blessedness hereafter.
GLOSTER. How now!
JANE SHORE. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones!
Shall they be left a prey to savage power?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to heaven for help and not be heard?
Impossible! O gallant, generous Hastings,
Go on, pursue! Assert the sacred cause.
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
The saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side.
GLOSTER. You're passing rich in this same heavenly speech,
And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me!
My favor is not bought with words like these.
Go to!—you'll teach your tongue another tale.
JANE SHORE. No, tho' the royal Edward has undone me,
He was my king, my gracious master still.
He loved me too; tho' 'twas a guilty flame
And fatal to my peace, yet still he lov'd me:
With fondness, and with tenderness he doted,
Dwelt in my eyes, and lived but in my smiles.
And can I—oh, my heart abhors the thought—
Stand by and see his children robbed of right?
GLOSTER. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me further;
None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery,
Your dainty, squeamish coying-it, to me!
Go—to your lord, your paramour. Be gone!
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
And play your monkey gambols over to him.
You know my purpose; look that you pursue it,
And make him yield obedience to my will.
Do it—or woe upon thy harlot's head!
JANE SHORE. Oh, that my tongue had ev'ry grace of speech,
Great and commanding as the breath of kings,
Sweet as the poet's numbers, and prevailing
As soft persuasion to a love-sick maid;
That I had art and eloquence divine
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
And plead till death the cause of injured innocence!
GLOSTER. Ha! dost thou brave me, minion? Dost thou know
How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make thee?
That I can let loose fear, distress, and famine,
To hunt thy heels like hell-hounds thro' the world?
That I can place thee in such abject state
As help shall never find thee—where repining

Thou shalt sit down and gnaw the earth for anguish,
Groan to the pitiless winds without return,
Howl like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
And curse thy life in bitterness of misery?
JANE SHORE. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turned forth and driven to wander like a vagabond;
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren, wild, and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan who has none to save him.
GLOSTER. 'Tis well—we'll try the temper of your heart.
What ho! Who waits without?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, *and* Attendants

RATCLIFFE. Your highness's pleasure.—
GLOSTER. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet forth!
Spurn her into the street; there let her perish
And rot upon a dunghill. Thro' the city
See it proclaimed that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbor.
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
The purchase of her loose, luxurious life,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
—Away! Be gone!
JANE SHORE. O thou most righteous judge—
Humbly, behold, I bow myself to thee,
And own thy justice in this hard decree:
No longer then my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;
No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

Exit JANE SHORE *guarded by* CATESBY *and others*

GLOSTER. So much for this. (*To* RATCLIFFE)
Your project's at an end:
This idle toy, this hilding, scorns my power,
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call—
RATCLIFFE. The Council waits
Upon your highness's leisure.—
GLOSTER. Bid 'em enter.

Enter the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, EARL OF DERBY, BISHOP OF ELY, LORD HASTINGS *and others, as to the Council. The* DUKE OF GLOSTER *takes his place at the upper end; then the rest sit*

DERBY. In happy time are we assembled here,
To point the day and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown with all due rites
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.
LORD HASTINGS. Some busy, meddling knaves 'tis said there are,
As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right.
Therefore I hold it fitting, with the soonest
T'appoint the order of the coronation;
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.
DERBY. (*To* GLOSTER) We all attend to know your highness's pleasure
GLOSTER. My lords! a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent and just, and careful for the state.
Therefore, to your most grave determination,
I yield myself in all things, and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T'inflict upon those damnable contrivers
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching drugs,
Practice against our person and our life.
LORD HASTINGS. So much I hold the king your highness's debtor,
So precious are you to the common-weal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.
GLOSTER. Then judge yourselves; convince your eyes of truth.
(*Pulling up his sleeve*)

Behold my arm thus blasted, dry and withered;
Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decayed,
Like some untimely product of the seasons;
Robbed of its properties of strength and office.
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
Who in conjunction with that harlot Shore
And other like confederate midnight hags,
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
And conjurations horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
And set the ministers of hell at work
To torture and despoil me of my life.

LORD HASTINGS. If they have done this deed—

GLOSTER. If they have done it!
Talk'st thou to me of if's, audacious traitor?
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
The patron and complotter of her mischiefs,
And joined in this contrivance for my death.
Nay, start not, lords.—What ho! a guard there, sirs!

Enter Guard

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason!
Seize him, and bear him instantly away;
He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul!
I will not dine before his head be brought me!
Ratcliffe, stay you and see that it be done.
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

Exeunt GLOSTER *and* Lords *following.* *Manent* LORD HASTINGS, RATCLIFFE, *and* Guard

LORD HASTINGS. What! and no more but this—how? to the scaffold!
O gentle Ratcliffe, tell me; do I hold thee?
Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
To break, to struggle thro' this dread confusion?
For surely death itself is not so painful
As is this sudden horror and surprise.

RATCLIFFE. You heard; the duke's commands to me were absolute.
Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift
With all good speed you may. Summon your courage,
And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

LORD HASTINGS. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly counsel,
And die as a man should. 'Tis somewhat hard
To call my scattered spirits home at once;
But since what must be, must be—let necessity
Supply the place of time and preparation,
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die;
'Tis but to venture on that common hazard
Which many a time in battle I have run;
'Tis but to do what, at that very moment,
In many nations of the peopled earth,
A thousand and a thousand shall do with me;
'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out daylight—
To view no more the wicked ways of men,
No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
And be a weeping witness of the woes,
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA

ALICIA. Stand off! and let me pass—I will, I must
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
And hold him to my heart.—O Hastings, Hastings!

LORD HASTINGS. Alas! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment,
To fill me with new terrors, new distractions;
To turn me wild with thy distempered rage,
And shock the peace of my departing soul?
Away! I prithee, leave me!

ALICIA. Stop a minute—
Till my full griefs find passage. Oh, the tyrant!
Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

LORD HASTINGS. What means thy frantic grief?

ALICIA. I cannot speak—
But I have murdered thee.—Oh, I would tell thee!

LORD HASTINGS. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicting passions.
Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense;
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
Break in at once. This way and that they snatch,
They tear my hurried soul. All claim attention,
And yet not one is heard. Oh, speak and leave me,
For I have business would employ an age,
And but a minute's time to get it done in.
ALICIA. That, that's my grief—'tis I that urge thee on,
Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.
LORD HASTINGS. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak hand
Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement?
ALICIA. Thy cruel scorn had stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames.
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I know not what—told the Protector,
That Shore's detested wife by wiles had won thee
To plot against his greatness.—He believed it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)
And while I meant destruction on her head,
H' has turned it all on thine.
LORD HASTINGS. Accursed Jealousy!
O merciless, wild, unforgiving fiend!
Blindfold it runs to undistinguished mischief,
And murders all it meets. Cursed be its rage,
For there is none so deadly; doubly cursed
Be all those easy fools who give it harbor,
Who turn a monster loose among mankind,
Fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence,
Baneful as death and horrible as hell.
ALICIA. If thou wilt curse, curse rather thine own falsehood;
Curse the lewd maxims of thy perjured sex,
Which taught thee first to laugh at faith and justice,
To scorn the solemn sanctity of oaths,
And make a jest of a poor woman's ruin;
Curse thy proud heart, and thy insulting tongue
That raised this fatal fury in my soul
And urged my vengeance to undo us both.
LORD HASTINGS. Oh, thou inhuman! turn thy eyes away.
And blast me not with their destructive beams.
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?
Be gone! and let me sigh it out in peace.
ALICIA. Canst thou—O cruel Hastings—leave me thus?
Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me!
While with an agonizing heart, I swear
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors, and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.
Oh! had I once divined, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died,
I would have met it for thee, and made bare
My ready, faithful breast to save thee from it.
LORD HASTINGS. Now mark! and tremble at Heaven's just award.
While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge
Pursued the innocence which never wronged thee,
Behold! the mischief falls on thee and me.
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion;
For me the snares of death are wound about me,
And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
Oh, if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knee,
And recommend my parting soul to mercy!
ALICIA. (*Kneeling*) Oh, yet, before I go forever from thee,
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me,

And in compassion of my strong affliction,
Say, is it possible you can forgive
The fatal rashness of ungoverned love?
For oh, 'tis certain, if I had not loved thee
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
Desired to death, and doted to distraction,
This day of horror never should have known us.

LORD HASTINGS. (*Raising her*) Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows!
Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more—
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
I see the hand of Heav'n is armed against me,
And, in mysterious providence, decrees
To punish me by thy mistaking hand.
Most righteous doom! for, oh, while I behold thee,
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
And charge thy ruin on me—thy fair fame,
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
Dishonored, blasted, and betrayed by me!

ALICIA. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
Oh, that inhuman Gloster could be moved
But half so easily as I can pardon!

LORD HASTINGS. Here, then, exchange we mutually forgiveness.
So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
As here I part without one angry thought;
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
And begging Heav'n to bless and to support thee.

RATCLIFFE. My lord, dispatch; the duke has sent to chide me
For loitering in my duty.—

LORD HASTINGS. I obey.

ALICIA. Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger; give him blood for blood!
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast him!
Some horrid, cursèd kind of death o'ertake him,
Sudden, and in the fullness of his sins!
That he may know how terrible it is
To want that moment he denies thee now.

LORD HASTINGS. 'Tis all in vain, this rage that tears thy bosom;
Like a poor bird that flutters in its cage,
Thou beat'st thyself to death. Retire, I beg thee;
To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds me;
Thy agonies are added to my own,
And make the burden more than I can bear.
Farewell—Good angels visit thy afflictions
And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

ALICIA. Oh, stab me to the heart; some pitying hand
Now strike me dead!

LORD HASTINGS. One thing I had forgot—
I charge thee by our present common miseries;
By our past loves, if yet they have a name;
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter—
Let not the rancor of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend.
Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; oh, shouldst thou wrong her,
Just Heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no end.—Remember this
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell forever!

(*The* Guards *carry* HASTINGS *off*)

ALICIA. Forever! Oh, forever!
Oh, who can bear to be a wretch forever!
My rival too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And, as he parted, left a blessing for her.
Shall she be blest, and I be cursed, forever?
No! Since her fatal beauty was the cause
Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains;
Let her, like me of ev'ry joy forlorn,
Devote[1] the hour when such a wretch was born:
Like me to deserts and to darkness run,

[1] curse.

Abhor the day, and curse the golden sun;
Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind;
Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind;
Like me, with cries distracted fill the air,
Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
And prove the torments of the last despair.
Exit

ACT V

Scene I. The street

Enter BELLMOUR *and* DUMONT, *or* SHORE

SHORE. You saw her then?
BELLMOUR. I met her, as returning
In solemn penance from the public cross.
Before her, certain rascal officers,
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
Proclaimed the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
On either side her marched an ill-looked priest,
Who with severe, with horrid, haggard eyes,
Did ever and anon by turns upbraid her,
And thunder in her trembling ear damnation.
Around her, numberless the rabble flowed,
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
Some pitying, but those, alas! how few!
The most—such iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind—
With insolence and lewd reproach pursued her,
Hooting and railing, and with villainous hands
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
To hurl upon her head.
SHORE. Inhuman dogs!
How did she bear it?
BELLMOUR. With the gentlest patience.
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders, carelessly confused,
With loose neglect her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread;
Feeble she seemed, and sorely smit with pain,
While bare-foot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were marked with blood.
Yet silent still she passed and unrepining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow
To Heav'n she seemed in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man denied her here.
SHORE. When was this piteous sight?
BELLMOUR. These last two days.
You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gained.
During that time, altho' I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about and watch a fit convenience
To give her some relief; but all in vain.
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
Who menace those with death that bring her comfort
And drive all succor from her.
SHORE. Let 'em threaten.
Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;
So Heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
To give her help and share one fortune with her.
BELLMOUR. Mean you to see her thus, in your own form?
SHORE. I do.
BELLMOUR. And have you thought upon the consequence?
SHORE. What is there I should fear?
BELLMOUR. Have you examined
Into your inmost heart, and tried at leisure
The several secret springs that move the passions?
Has Mercy fixed her empire there so sure,
That Wrath and Vengeance never may return?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce Resentment, sleep?
SHORE. Why dost thou search so deep, and urge my memory
To conjure up my wrongs to life again?
I have long labored to forget myself,
To think on all time, backward, like a space
Idle and void, where nothing e'er had being.

But thou hast peopled it again; Revenge
And Jealousy renew their horrid forms,
Shoot all their fires, and drive me to distraction.
BELLMOUR. Far be the thought from me! my care was only
To arm you for the meeting. Better were it
Never to see her than to let that name
Recall forgotten rage, and make the husband
Destroy the generous pity of Dumont.
SHORE. Oh! thou hast set my busy brain at work,
And now she musters up a train of images
Which to preserve my peace I had cast aside
And sunk in deep oblivion—Oh, that form!
That angel-face on which my dotage hung!
How I have gazed upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issued at my eyes.—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields,
What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,
Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?
What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.
BELLMOUR. Away with that sad fancy.—
SHORE. Oh, that day!
The thought of it must live forever with me.
I met her, Bellmour, when the royal spoiler
Bore her in triumph from my widowed home!
Within his chariot by his side she sate
And listened to his talk with downward looks;
Till sudden, as she chanced aside to glance,
Her eyes encountered mine.—Oh, then, my friend!
Oh, who can paint my grief and her amazement!
As at the stroke of death, twice turned she pale,
And twice a burning crimson blushed all o'er her;
Then, with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she cried,
While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung.
Moved at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
With courteous action wooed her oft to turn;
Earnest he seemed to plead, but all in vain;
Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
And followed me—till I had lost myself.
BELLMOUR. Alas, for pity! Oh, those speaking tears!
Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you?
For tho' the king by force possessed her person,
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you.
If all her former woes were not enough,
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,
Hunted to death, distressed on every side,
With no one hand to help; and tell me, then,
If ever misery were known like hers.
SHORE. And can she bear it? Can that delicate frame
Endure the beating of a storm so rude?
Can she, for whom the various seasons changed
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were pressed,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she—
Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
To wrap her shivering bosom from the weather?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her.
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring
Too rough to breathe upon her. Cheerfulness
Danced all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow.
Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps, she lies
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.

It is too much.—Hence with her past offences;
They are atoned at full. Why stay we then?
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.
BELLMOUR. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor, abandoned creature lingers.
Her guard, tho' set with strictest watch to keep
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.
SHORE. Here then let us divide, each in his round
To search her sorrows out. Whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together. *Exeunt*

Enter JANE SHORE, *her hair hanging loose on her shoulders, and bare-footed*

JANE SHORE. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my soul!
For are not thy transgressions great and numberless?
Do they not cover thee, like rising floods,
And press thee like a weight of waters down?
Does not the hand of righteousness afflict thee;
And who shall plead against it? Who shall say
To Pow'r Almighty, "Thou hast done enough":
Or bid his dreadful rod of vengeance stay?
Wait then with patience till the circling hours
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest
And lay thee down in death. The hireling thus
With labor drudges out the painful day,
And often looks with long expecting eyes
To see the shadows rise and be dismissed.
And hark! methinks the roar that late pursued me
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
And softens into silence. Does revenge
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?
My guard, too, that observed me still so close,
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
And loiter far behind? Alas, I faint;
My spirits fail at once.—This is the door
Of my Alicia—blessed opportunity!
I'll steal a little succor from her goodness,
Now, while no eye observes me.
(*She knocks at the door*)

Enter a Servant

Is your lady—
My gentle friend, at home? Oh, bring me to her. (*Going in*)
SERVANT. (*Putting her back*) Hold, mistress, whither would you?
JANE SHORE. Do you not know me?
SERVANT. I know you well, and know my orders too.
You must not enter here.
JANE SHORE. Tell my Alicia,
'Tis I would see her.
SERVANT. She is ill at ease
And will admit no visitor.
JANE SHORE. But tell her
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—
SERVANT. 'Tis all in vain—
Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you. *Shuts the door and exit*
JANE SHORE. It was not always thus; the time has been
When this unfriendly door that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leaped from off its hinges
To give me entrance here; when this good house
Has poured forth all its dwellers to receive me;
When my approach has made a little holy-day,
And ev'ry face was dressed in smiles to meet me.
But now 'tis otherwise, and those who blessed me
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander—
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here!
(*She sits down at the door*)

Enter ALICIA *in disorder, two* Servants *following*

ALICIA. What wretch art thou whose misery and baseness
Hangs on my door; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?
JANE SHORE. A very beggar, and a wretch indeed;
One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succor here; one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.
ALICIA. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread?
I know thee not.—Go, hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scattered it,
Or cast it on the waters.—Mark the eagle
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them—I know thee not.
JANE SHORE. And yet there was a time when my Alicia
Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing,
And mourned that live-long day she passed without me;
When, paired like turtles, we were still together;
When often as we prattled arm in arm,
Inclining fondly to me, she has sworn
She loved me more than all the world beside.
ALICIA. Ha! say'st thou!—let me look upon thee well—
'Tis true—I know thee now—A mischief on thee!—
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursèd she,
That set my brain a madding. Thou hast robbed me;
Thou hast undone me.—Murder! Oh, my Hastings!
—See, his pale, bloody head shoots glaring by me!
Give him me back again, thou soft deluder,
Thou beauteous witch—
JANE SHORE. Alas, I never wronged you!
Oh, then be good to me; have pity on me!
Thou never knew'st the bitterness of want,
And may'st thou never know it. Oh, bestow
Some poor remain, the voiding of thy table,
A morsel to support my famished soul.
ALICIA. Avaunt! and come not near me—
JANE SHORE. To thy hand
I trusted all—gave my whole store to thee.
Nor do I ask it back; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.
ALICIA. Nay, tell not me! Where is thy king, thy Edward,
And all the smiling, cringing train of courtiers
That bent the knee before thee?
JANE SHORE. Oh, for mercy!
ALICIA. Mercy? I know it not—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells.
This is her house, where the sun never dawns;
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark! something cracks above!—It shakes, it totters!
And see, the nodding ruin falls to crush me!
—'Tis fall'n, 'tis here! I feel it on my brain!
1 SERVANT. This sight disorders her—
2 SERVANT. Retire, dear lady—
And leave this woman—
ALICIA. Let her take my counsel!
Why shouldst thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy heart,
And rid thyself of this detested being;
I wo'not linger long behind thee here.
A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me;
—And now 'tis out, and I am drowned in blood.
—Ha! what art thou, thou horrid headless trunk?

It is my Hastings!—See, he wafts me on!
Away! I go! I fly! I follow thee.
—But come not thou with mischief-making beauty
To interpose between us; look not on him;
Give thy fond arts and thy delusions o'er,
For thou shalt never, never part us more.
(*She runs off, her* Servants *following*)
JANE SHORE. Alas! she raves; her brain,
I fear, is turned.
In mercy look upon her, gracious Heaven,
Nor visit her for any wrong to me.
Sure, I am near upon my journey's end;
My head runs round; my eyes begin to fail,
And dancing shadows swim before my sight.
I can no more. (*Lies down*) Receive me, thou cold Earth;
Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELLMOUR

BELLMOUR. Upon the ground!
Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.
—Look up, thou poor afflicted one—thou mourner,
Whom none has comforted! Where are thy friends,
The dear companions of thy joyful days,
Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,
And bind thee to their bosoms? Thus with thee,
Thus let us live, and let us die, they said;
For sure thou art the sister of our loves,
And nothing shall divide us.—Now where are they?
JANE SHORE. Ah! Bellmour, where indeed! they stand aloof,
And view my desolation from a-far;
When they pass by, they shake their heads in scorn
And cry, "Behold the harlot and her end!"
And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me!
—Alas! there may be danger; get thee gone!
Let me not pull a ruin on thy head!
Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n
Never to rise, and all relief is vain.
BELLMOUR. Yet raise thy drooping head, for I am come
To chase away despair. Behold, where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
Is hasting to thy aid!—
JANE SHORE. (*Raising herself and looking about*)—Dumont? Ha! where?
Then Heav'n has heard my pray'r; his very name
Renews the springs of life and cheers my soul.
Has he then 'scaped the snare?
BELLMOUR. He has, but see—
He comes, unlike to that Dumont you knew,
For now he wears your better angel's form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE

JANE SHORE. Speak—tell me! Which is he? And oh! what would
This dreadful vision! See, it comes upon me—
It is my husband—Ah! (*She swoons*)
SHORE. She faints! Support her;
Sustain her head while I infuse this cordial
Into her dying lips—from spicy drugs,
Rich herbs, and flow'rs the potent juice is drawn;
With wondrous force it strikes the lazy spirits,
Drives 'em around, and wakens life anew.
BELLMOUR. Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.
—But see, she stirs! and the returning blood
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
Upon her ashy cheek—
SHORE. (*Raising her up*) So,—gently raise her—
JANE SHORE. Ha, what art thou?—Bellmour!
BELLMOUR. How fare you, lady?
JANE SHORE. My heart is thrilled with horror—
BELLMOUR. Be of courage—
Your husband lives! 'Tis he, my worthiest friend—

JANE SHORE. Still art thou there?—still dost thou hover round me?
Oh, save me, Bellmour, from his angry shade!
BELLMOUR. 'Tis he himself!—he lives!—look up—
JANE SHORE. I dare not!
Oh, that my eyes could shut him out forever—
SHORE. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with horror? Since I'm grown
A burthen to the world, myself, and thee,
Would I had ne'er survived to see thee more.
JANE SHORE. Oh, thou most injured!—Dost thou live, indeed?
Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head;
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O Night,
And shield me with thy sable wing forever!
SHORE. Why dost thou turn away?—why tremble thus?
Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.
My arms, my heart are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home
With tender joy, with fond, forgiving love,
And all the longings of my first desires.
JANE SHORE. No, arm thy brow with vengeance, and appear
The minister of Heav'n's enquiring justice;
Array thyself all terrible for judgment,
Wrath in thy eyes, and thunder in thy voice;
Pronounce my sentence, and if yet there be
A woe I have not felt, inflict it on me.
SHORE. The measure of thy sorrows is complete,
And I am come to snatch thee from injustice.
The hand of pow'r no more shall crush thy weakness,
Nor proud oppression grind thy humble soul.
JANE SHORE. Art thou not risen by miracle from death?
Thy shroud is fall'n from off thee, and the grave
Was bid to give thee up, that thou might'st come
The messenger of grace and goodness to me,
To seal my peace and bless me ere I go.
Oh, let me then fall down beneath thy feet
And weep my gratitude forever there;
Give me your drops, ye soft-descending rains,
Give me your streams, ye never ceasing springs,
That my sad eyes may still supply my duty,
And feed an everlasting flood of sorrow.
SHORE. Waste not thy feeble spirits. I have long
Beheld, unknown, thy mourning and repentance;
Therefore my heart has set aside the past,
And holds thee white as unoffending innocence;
Therefore, in spite of cruel Gloster's rage,
Soon as my friend had broke my prison doors,
I flew to thy assistance. Let us haste
Now, while occasion seems to smile upon us,
Forsake this place of shame and find a shelter.
JANE SHORE. What shall I say to you? But I obey—
SHORE. Lean on my arm—
JANE SHORE. Alas! I am wondrous faint:
But that's not strange; I have not eat these three days.
SHORE. Oh, merciless! Look here, my love, I've brought thee
Some rich conserves.—
JANE SHORE. How can you be so good?
But you were ever thus; I well remember
With what fond care, what diligence of love,
You lavished out your wealth to buy me pleasures,
Preventing every wish. Have you forgot
The costly string of pearl you brought me home
And tied about my neck?—How could I leave you?
SHORE. Taste some of this, or this—
JANE SHORE. You're strangely altered—
Say, gentle Bellmour, is he not? How pale

Your visage is become! Your eyes are hollow;
Nay, you are wrinkled too.—Alas the day!
My wretchedness has cost you many a tear
And many a bitter pang since last we parted.
SHORE. No more of that—thou talk'st but dost not eat.
JANE SHORE. My feeble jaws forget their common office,
My tasteless tongue cleaves to the clammy roof,
And now a gen'ral loathing grows upon me.—
Oh, I am sick at heart!— [*She faints*]
SHORE. Thou murd'rous sorrow!
Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?
Must she then die? Oh, my poor penitent,
Speak peace to thy sad heart. She hears me not;
Grief masters ev'ry sense.—Help me to hold her—

Enter CATESBY, *with a* Guard

CATESBY. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state.
(Guard *lays hold on* SHORE *and* BELLMOUR)
BELLMOUR. What means this violence?
CATESBY. Have we not found you,
In scorn of the Protector's strict command,
Assisting this base woman and abetting
Her infamy?
SHORE. Infamy on thy head!
Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!
I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,
And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her!
CATESBY. You'll answer this at full.—Away with 'em.
SHORE. Is charity grown treason to your court?
What honest man would live beneath such rulers?
I am content that we shall die together.—
CATESBY. Convey the men to prison; but for her,
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.
JANE SHORE. [*Reviving*] I will not part with him!—For me—for me!
Oh, must he die for me?
(*Following him as he is carried off. She falls*)
SHORE. Inhuman villains!
(*Breaks from the* Guard)
Stand off! the agonies of death are on her—
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.
JANE SHORE. Was this blow wanting to complete my ruin?
Oh, let him go, ye ministers of terror;
He shall offend no more, for I will die
And yield obedience to your cruel master.
Tarry a little, but a little longer,
And take my last breath with you.
SHORE. O my love!—
Why have I lived to see this bitter moment,
This grief by far surpassing all my former!
Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me
With such an earnest, such a piteous look,
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning
Thou couldst not speak!—
JANE SHORE. Forgive me!—but forgive me!
SHORE. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul
Accords to thee, and begs of Heav'n to show thee,
May such befall me at my latest hour,
And make my portion blest or cursed forever.
JANE SHORE. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace.
'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now.
—Was there not something I would have bequeathed you?
But I have nothing left me to bestow—
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh mercy, Heav'n! (*Dies*)
BELLMOUR. There fled the soul,
And left her load of misery behind.
SHORE. Oh, my heart's treasure! Is this pale, sad visage
All that remains of thee? Are these dead eyes

The light that cheer my soul? Oh, heavy hour!
But I will fix my trembling lips to thine
Till I am cold and senseless quite, as thou art.
What, must we part then?—
(*To the* Guards *taking him away*)
—Will you—
(*Kissing her*)
Fare thee well!
—Now execute your tyrant's will, and lead me
To bonds or death; 'tis equally indifferent.
BELLMOUR. Let those who view this sad example know
What fate attends the broken marriage vow;
And teach their children in succeeding times,
No common vengeance waits upon these crimes,
When such severe repentance could not save,
From want, from shame, and an untimely grave. *Exeunt*

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MRS. OLDFIELD

Ye modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,
Who lead with horrid husbands decent lives,
You who for all you are in such a taking
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,
Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making;
What can we say your pardon to obtain?
This matter here was proved against poor Jane:
She never once denied it, but in short,
Whimpered,—and cried, "Sweet sir,—I'm sorry for't."
'Twas well she met a kind, good-natured soul,
We are not all so easy to control.
I fancy one might find in this good town
Some would ha' told the gentleman his own;
Have answered smart, "To what do you pretend,
Blockhead?—As if I mustn't see a friend!
Tell me of hackney-coaches—jaunts to th' City—
Where should I buy my china?—Faith, I'll fit ye!—"
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit:
You!—lords and masters!—was not that some merit?
Don't you allow it to be virtuous bearing,
When we submit thus to your domineering?
Well, peace be with her; she did wrong most surely,
But so do many more who look demurely:
Nor should our mourning madam weep alone,
There are more ways of wickedness than one.
If the reforming stage should fall to shaming
Ill-nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming;
The poets frequently might move compassion,
And with she tragedies o'er-run the nation.
Then judge the fair offender, with good nature;
And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.
What if our neighbors have some little failing;
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing?
For her excuse too, be it understood,
That if the woman was not quite so good,
Her lover was a king; she, flesh and blood.
And since she has dearly paid the sinful score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS

A Comedy by Richard Steele

Illud genus narrationis quod in personis positum est, debet habere sermonis festivitatem, animorum dissimilitudinem, gravitatem, lenitatem, spem, metum, suspicionem, desiderium, dissimulationem, misericordiam, rerum varietates, fortunæ commutationem, insperatum incommodum, subitam lætitiam, jucundum exitum rerum.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Sir John Bevil
Mr. Sealand
Bevil, Jun[ior], in love with Indiana
Myrtle, in love with Lucinda
Cimberton, a coxcomb
Humphr[e]y, an old servant to Sir John
Tom, servant to Bevil, Jun[ior]
Daniel, a country boy, servant to Indiana

Women

Mrs. Sealand, second wife to Sealand
Isabella, sister to Sealand
Indiana, Sealand's daughter, by his first wife
Lucinda, Sealand's daughter, by his second wife
Phillis, maid to Lucinda

Scene: *London*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

[DEDICATION]

To the King

May it please your Majesty,

After having aspired to the highest and most laudable ambition, that of following the cause of liberty, I should not have humbly petitioned your Majesty for a direction of the theatre had I not believed success in that province an happiness much to be wished by an honest man, and highly conducing to the prosperity of the commonwealth. It is in this view I lay before your Majesty a comedy which the audience, in justice to themselves, has supported and encouraged, and is the prelude of what, by your Majesty's influence and favor, may be attempted in future representations.

The imperial mantle, the royal vestment, and the shining diadem are what strike ordinary minds; but your Majesty's native goodness, your passion for justice and her constant assessor, mercy, is what continually surrounds you in the view of intelligent spirits and gives hope to the suppliant, who sees he has more than succeeded in giving your Majesty an opportunity of doing good. Our King is above the greatness of royalty, and every act of his will which makes another man happy has ten times more charms in it than one that makes himself appear raised above the condition of others. But even this carries unhappiness with it; for calm dominion, equal grandeur, and familiar greatness do not easily affect the imagination of the vulgar, who cannot see power but in terror; and as fear moves mean spirits, and love prompts great ones to obey, the insinuations of malcontents are directed accordingly; and the unhappy people are ensnared, from want of reflection, into disrespectful ideas of their gracious and amiable sovereign, and then only begin to apprehend the greatness of their master when they have incurred his displeasure.

As your Majesty was invited to the throne of a willing people, for their own sakes, and has ever enjoyed it with contempt of the ostentation of it, we beseech you to protect us who revere your title as we love your person. 'Tis to be a savage to be a rebel, and they who have fallen from you have not so much forfeited their allegiance as lost their humanity. And, therefore, if it were only to preserve myself from the imputation of being amongst the insensible and abandoned, I would beg permission in the most public manner possible to profess myself, with the utmost sincerity and zeal,

Sire,
Your Majesty's
Most devoted subject
And servant,
Richard Steele

THE PREFACE

This comedy has been received with universal acceptance, for it was in every part excellently performed; and there needs no other applause of the actors but that they excelled according to the dignity and difficulty of the character they represented. But this great favor done to the work in acting renders the expectation still the greater from the author, to keep up the spirit in the representation of the closet, or any other circumstance of the reader, whether alone or in company; to which I can only say that it must be remembered, a play is to be seen, and is made to be represented with the advantage of action, nor can appear but with half the spirit without it. For the greatest effect of a play in reading is to excite the reader to go to see it; and when he does so, it is then a play has the effect of example and precept.

The chief design of this was to be an innocent performance, and the audience have abundantly shown how ready they are to support what is visibly intended that way. Nor do I make any difficulty to acknowledge that the whole was writ for the sake of the scene of the Fourth Act, wherein Mr. Bevil evades the quarrel with his friend, and hope it may have some effect upon the Goths and Vandals that frequent the theatres, or a more polite audience may supply their absence.

But this incident, and the case of the father and daughter, are esteemed by some people no subjects of comedy. But I cannot be of their mind, for anything that has its foundation in happiness and success must be allowed to be the object of comedy; and sure it must be an improvement of it to introduce a joy too exquisite for laughter, that can have no spring but in delight, which is the case of this young lady. I must, therefore, contend that the tears which were shed on that occasion flowed from reason and good sense, and that men ought not to be laughed at for weeping till we are come to a more clear notion of what is to be imputed to the hardness of the head and the softness of the heart; and I think it was very politely said of Mr. Wilks, to one who told him there was a general weeping for Indiana, "I'll warrant he'll fight ne'er the worse for that." To be apt to give way to the impressions of humanity, is the excellence of a right disposition and the natural working of a well-turned spirit. But as I have suffered by critics who have got no farther than to inquire whether they ought to be pleased or not, I would willingly find them properer matter for their employment, and revive here a song which was omitted for want of a performer, and designed for the entertainment of Indiana. Signor Carbonelli, instead of it, played on the fiddle, and it is for want of a singer that such advantageous things are said of an instrument which were designed for a voice. The song is the distress of a love-sick maid, and may be a fit entertainment for some small critics to examine whether the passion is just or the distress male or female.

I

From place to place forlorn I go,
  With downcast eyes a silent shade;
Forbidden to declare my woe;
  To speak till spoken to, afraid.

II

My inward pangs, my secret grief,
  My soft, consenting looks betray.
He loves, but gives me no relief;
  Why speaks not he who may?

It remains to say a word concerning Terence, and I am extremely surprised to find what Mr. Cibber told me prove a truth—that what I valued myself so much upon—the translation of him—should be imputed to me as a reproach. Mr. Cibber's zeal for the work, his care and application in instructing the actors and altering the disposition of the scenes, when I was, through sickness, unable to cultivate such things myself, has been a very obliging favor and friendship to me. For this reason I was very hardly persuaded to throw away Terence's celebrated funeral,[1] and take only the bare authority of the young man's character; and how I have worked it into an Englishman, and made use of the same circumstances of discovering a daughter when we least hoped for one, is humbly submitted to the learned reader.

PROLOGUE

By Mr. Welsted

Spoken by Mr. Wilks

To win your hearts and to secure your praise,
The comic writers strive by various ways;
By subtle stratagems they act their game,

[1] In the *Andria*.

And leave untried no avenue to fame.
One writes the spouse a beating from his wife,
And says each stroke was copied from the life.
Some fix all wit and humor in grimace,
And make a livelihood of Pinkey's face.
Here, one gay show and costly habits tries,
Confiding to the judgment of your eyes;
Another smuts his scene (a cunning shaver),
Sure of the rakes' and of the wenches' favor.
Oft have these arts prevailed, and one may guess,
If practised o'er again, would find success.
But the bold sage—the poet of to-night—
By new and desperate rules resolved to write;
Fain would he give more just applauses rise,
And please by wit that scorns the aids of vice.
The praise he seeks from worthier motives springs,
Such praise as praise to those that give it brings.
Your aid most humbly sought, then, Britons lend,
And lib'ral mirth like lib'ral men defend.
No more let ribaldry, with licence writ,
Usurp the name of eloquence or wit;
No more let lawless farce uncensured go,
The lewd dull gleanings of a Smithfield show.[1]
'Tis yours with breeding to refine the age,
To chasten wit, and moralise the stage.
Ye modest, wise and good, ye fair, ye brave,
To-night the champion of your virtues save;
Redeem from long contempt the comic name,
And judge politely for your country's fame.

ACT I

SCENE I. SIR JOHN BEVIL'S *house*

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL *and* HUMPHREY

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Have you ordered that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

HUMPHREY. Yes, sir; I believed you had something of moment to say to me.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Let me see, Humphrey. I think it is now full forty years since I first took thee to be about myself.

HUMPHREY. I thank you, sir; it has been an easy forty years, and I have passed 'em without much sickness, care, or labor.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Thou hast a brave constitution; you are a year or two older than I am, sirrah.

HUMPHREY. You have ever been of that mind, sir.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. You knave, you know it; I took thee for thy gravity and sobriety, in my wild years.

HUMPHREY. Ah, sir! our manners were formed from our different fortunes, not our different age. Wealth gave a loose to your youth and poverty put a restraint upon mine.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Well, Humphrey, you know I have been a kind master to you; I have used you, for the ingenuous nature I observed in you from the beginning, more like an humble friend than a servant.

HUMPHREY. I humbly beg you'll be so tender of me as to explain your commands, sir, without any farther preparation.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. I'll tell thee, then. In the first place, this wedding of my son's in all probability—shut the door—will never be at all.

HUMPHREY. How, sir! not be at all? For what reason is it carried on in appearance?

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Honest Humphrey, have patience, and I'll tell thee all in order. I have, myself, in some part of my life, lived indeed with freedom, but I hope without reproach. Now, I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulged him in living after his own manner. I knew not how, otherwise, to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behavior under restraint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never, in the least action, the most distant hint, or word, valued himself upon that great

[1] At Bartholomew Fair.

estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

HUMPHREY. No, sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it before you or any belonging to you. He is as dependent and resigned to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty. You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Nay, his carriage is so easy to all with whom he converses, that he is never assuming, never prefers himself to others, nor ever is guilty of that rough sincerity which a man is not called to and certainly disobliges most of his acquaintance; to be short, Humphrey, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offered his only daughter and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties; the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

HUMPHREY. What hinders the proceeding?

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Don't interrupt me. You know I was last Thursday at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out. He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and tho' it was the mode in the last age, yet the masquers, you know, followed us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

HUMPHREY. I remember, indeed, a young man of quality in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Right; he was too much what he seemed to be. You remember how impertinently he followed and teased us, and would know who we were.

HUMPHREY. (*Aside*) I know he has a mind to come into that particular.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Aye, he followed us till the gentleman who led the lady in the Indian mantle presented that gay creature to the rustic, and bid him (like Cymon[1] in the fable) grow polite by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone—meaning me. The clown was not reformed, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off my mask; with that the gentleman, throwing off his own, appeared to be my son, and in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman. At this they seized each other, the company called the guards, and in the surprise the lady swooned away; upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady. When raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cried he, "forever?—forbid it, Heaven!" She revives at his known voice, and with the most familiar, tho' modest, gesture, hangs in safety over his shoulder weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation. While she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

HUMPHREY. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzzed about, she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer who had served in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her—

HUMPHREY. Was what, I suppose, alarmed Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match?

SIR JOHN BEVIL. You are right. He came to me yesterday and said he thought himself disengaged from the bargain, being credibly informed my son was already married, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

HUMPHREY. Well, sir; and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

SIR JOHN BEVIL. That's what I wanted to debate with you. I have said nothing to him yet—but look you, Humphrey. If there is

[1] In the *Decameron*, V, 1.

so much in this amour of his that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and then by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engaged to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to take my measures. In the meantime I would have you find out how far that rogue, his man, is let into his secret. He, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me, as to serve his master.

HUMPHREY. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you, at your son's age.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long; I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue Tom that I am in earnest.—I'll leave him to you. *Exit* SIR JOHN BEVIL

HUMPHREY. Well, though this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain is attended with constant mutual uneasiness. I'm sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both. But they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful, however.—Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught.—Ho! ho! Tom, whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter TOM, *singing*

TOM. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than you domestic ordinary drudges that do business; we are raised above you. The pleasures of board-wages, tavern dinners, and many a clear gain—vails,[1] alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

HUMPHREY. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a year, though 'tis but as t'other day that I sent for you to town to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience. You then pulled off your hat to everyone you met in the street, like a bashful great awkward cub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop. That's fit for nothing, except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand when you are impertinent.

TOM. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth—when you went to dinner because it was so much o'clock, when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

HUMPHREY. Why, you wild rogue!

TOM. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow in a black gown said something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

HUMPHREY. Sirrah, who do you prate after? Despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my good young master talk so like a profligate.

TOM. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

HUMPHREY. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I supposed at that time your master and you might have dined at home every day and cost you nothing; then you might have made a good family servant. But the gang you have frequented since at chocolate houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance—

TOM. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen, who are well fed and cut a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

HUMPHREY. Very well, sir, I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at

[1] Perquisites of servants.

an end, since it has arrived at persons of your quality.

TOM. Master Humphrey, ha! ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why, now, sir, the lackeys are the men of pleasure of the age—the top gamesters, and many a laced coat about town have had their education in our party-colored regiment. We are false lovers; have a taste of music, poetry. billet-doux, dress, politics; ruin damsels; and when we are tired of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs and linen, and marry fortunes.

HUMPHREY. Hey-day!

TOM. Nay, sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions; step but into the Painted Chamber, and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality. Then, again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation; and though we never carry a question *nemine contradicente*,[1] yet this I can say, with a safe conscience (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same), that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

HUMPHREY. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer. I wanted to see you to enquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them. I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day?

TOM. Aye, sir, he knows it, and is dressed as gay as the sun; but, between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dressed I retired, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walked thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet; when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid, you know—

HUMPHREY. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

TOM. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas and ridottos for the winter, the parks and Belsize for our summer diversions; and "Lard!" says she, "you are so wild!—but you have a world of humor."

HUMPHREY. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he ordered you?

TOM. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

HUMPHREY. Not easily come at? Why, sirrah, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

TOM. It's no matter for that; her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it, and you must know, Mr. Humphrey, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

HUMPHREY. What dost thou mean?

TOM. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff, starched philosopher and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffered no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

HUMPHREY. And where had you this intelligence?

TOM. From a foolish, fond soul that can keep nothing from me—one that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly managed.

HUMPHREY. What! her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

TOM. Even she, sir; this is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to your housekeeper, forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at—

HUMPHREY. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

TOM. Nothing else in nature; you must know, I love to fret and play with the little wanton.

HUMPHREY. —Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to!

TOM. I met her this morning in a new manteau and petticoat not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing; and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes. Then, she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house,

[1] without contradiction.

and is, indeed, the whole town of coquets at second-hand.—But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

HUMPHREY. Then I hope, dear sir, when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

TOM. Dear Humphrey, you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget.

HUMPHREY. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. *Exit*

Enter PHILLIS

PHILLIS. Oh, Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugarkey at home? Lard, one is almost ashamed to pass along the streets! The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see anything dressed like a woman of condition, as it were, on the same floor with them, pass by! Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk. Oh, fortune! fortune!

TOM. What! a sad thing to walk? Why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

PHILLIS. No, Mr. Tom, but I wish I were generally carried in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to fleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook; yet all become me, and if I was rich, I could twire[1] and loll as well as the best of them. Oh, Tom! Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquet, and yet be such poor devils as we are!

TOM. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that—

PHILLIS. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast manteaus—that any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy, for now only it was becoming.—To my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said, after somebody or other. Oh, Tom! Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all; but, you wretch, talk to me no more on the old odious subject—don't, I say.

TOM. (*In a submissive tone, retiring*) I know not how to resist your commands, madam.

PHILLIS. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

TOM. (*Aside*) Oh, I have her; I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a-prating.—Why, truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

PHILLIS. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

TOM. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

PHILLIS. I thank you, sir, I am a part of that whole.

TOM. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

PHILLIS. Good Phillis! Saucy enough. But however—

TOM. I say, it is that thou art a part which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man, at the bottom, of prodigious nice honor. You are too much exposed to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

PHILLIS. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

TOM. Ah, Phillis! Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

PHILLIS. I know too much on't.

TOM. Nay, then, poor Crispo's fate and mine are one. Therefore give me leave to say, or sing at least, as he does upon the same occasion— (*Sings*)

Se vedette, etc.

PHILLIS. What, do you think I'm to be fobbed off with a song? I don't question but you have sung the same to Mrs. Judy too.

[1] cast glances.

TOM. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussy, and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis. 441

PHILLIS. What would the fop be at now? In good time, indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune!

TOM. Dear Mrs. Phillis, you have such a spirit that we shall never be dull in marriage when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands. (*He pulls out a purse; she eyes it*)

PHILLIS. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Tom? 451

TOM. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased or displeased; neither sick or well; when she lolls or loiters; when she's without desires—from having more of everything than she knows what to do with. 457

PHILLIS. Well, what then?

TOM. —When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open, to look at her own dear image in the glass. 461

PHILLIS. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

TOM. There are also prosperous and good-natured moments; as when a knot or a patch is happily fixed, when the complexion particularly flourishes. 467

PHILLIS. Well, what then? I have not patience!

TOM. Why, then—or on the like occasions—we servants who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this (*Shows a letter*) may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humor. And, madam, because it is a long, wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road. (*Gives her the purse*)

PHILLIS. Now you think me a corrupt hussy. 482

TOM. Oh, fie! I only think you'll take the letter.

PHILLIS. Nay, I know you do, but I know my own innocence; I take it for my mistress's sake. 487

TOM. I know it, my pretty one; I know it.

PHILLIS. Yes, I say, I do it because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion; but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home. No, Tom, I assure thee, I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose— 498

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign.

Exeunt

SCENE II. BEVIL, JUNIOR'S *lodgings*

BEVIL, JUNIOR, *reading*

BEVIL, JUNIOR. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza[1]! Such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart! If this lady my father urges me to marry should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? Is not she in equal distress with me? Has not the letter I have sent her this morning confessed my inclination to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements, too, to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it, for sure to be denied is a favor any man may pretend to. It must be so; well, then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her. Then let me resolve upon—what I am not very good at, though it is—an honest dissimulation. 23

1 See the *Spectator*, 159.

Enter TOM

TOM. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Dunce! Why did not you bring him in?

TOM. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father anywhere. (*Going himself to the door*)

TOM. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. (*Aside*)

BEVIL, JUNIOR. (*Introducing* SIR JOHN) Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents. Sure, 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours. Why would you not walk in, sir?

SIR JOHN BEVIL. I was loth to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. One to whom I am beholden for my birthday might have used less ceremony.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter, for courtship must then be over.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family, but much acknowledgment of the lady's greater desert.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? And will you really marry her?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, sir?—nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon?

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Why, I can't say you have, son; but methinks, in this whole business you have not been so warm as I could have wished you. You have visited her, it's true, but you have not been particular. Everyone knows you can say and do as handsome things as any man, but you have done nothing but lived in the general—been complaisant only.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. As I am ever prepared to marry if you bid me, so I am ready to let it alone if you will have me.

HUMPHREY *enters, unobserved*

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Look you there now! Why, what am I to think of this so absolute and so indifferent a resignation?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Think? that I am still your son, sir. Sir, you have been married, and I have not. And you have, sir, found the inconvenience there is when a man weds with too much love in his head. I have been told, sir, that at the time you married, you made a mighty bustle on the occasion. There was challenging and fighting, scaling walls, locking up the lady, and the gallant under an arrest for fear of killing all his rivals. Now, sir, I suppose you, having found the ill consequences of these strong passions and prejudices, in preference of one woman to another, in case of a man's becoming a widower—

SIR JOHN BEVIL. How is this?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I say, sir, experience has made you wiser in your care of me; for, sir, since you lost my dear mother, your time has been so heavy, so lonely, and so tasteless, that you are so good as to guard me against the like unhappiness, by marrying me prudentially by way of bargain and sale. For as you well judge, a woman that is espoused for a fortune, is yet a better bargain if she dies; for then a man still enjoys what he did marry, the money, and is disencumbered of what he did not marry, the woman.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. But pray, sir, do you think Lucinda, then, a woman of such little merit?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Pardon me, sir, I don't carry it so far neither. I am rather afraid I shall like her too well; she has, for one of her fortune, a great many needless and superfluous good qualities.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. I am afraid, son, there's something I don't see yet—something that's smothered under all this raillery.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Not in the least, sir. If the lady is dressed and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

HUMPHREY. (*Aside*) This may grow warm if I don't interpose.—Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Oh, that's well! Then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair, and go to Mr. Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. By no means. The old fellow will be so vain if he sees—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Aye; but the young lady, sir, will think me so indifferent.

HUMPHREY. (*Aside to* BEVIL, JUNIOR) Aye, there you are right; press your readiness to go to the bride—he won't let you.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. (*Aside to* HUMPHREY) Are you sure of that?

HUMPHREY. (*Aside*) How he likes being prevented!

SIR JOHN BEVIL. (*Looking on his watch*) No, no. You are an hour or two too early.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You'll allow me, sir, to think it too late to visit a beautiful, virtuous young woman, in the pride and bloom of life, ready to give herself to my arms and to place her happiness or misery, for the future, in being agreeable or displeasing to me, is a —Call a chair!

SIR JOHN BEVIL. No, no, no! dear Jack; this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day; it is the last of his commanding his daughter.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Sir, he can't take it ill that I am impatient to be hers.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Pray, let me govern in this matter; you can't tell how humorsome old fellows are. There's no offering reason to some of 'em, especially when they are rich.—(*Aside*) If my son should see him before I've brought old Sealand into better temper, the match would be impracticable.

HUMPHREY. (*Aside to* SIR JOHN) Pray, sir, let me beg you to let Mr. Bevil go.—See whether he will or not.—(*Then to* BEVIL, JUNIOR) Pray, sir, command yourself; since you see my master is positive, it is better you should not go.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. My father commands me as to the object of my affections, but I hope he will not as to the warmth and height of them.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. [*Aside*] So! I must even leave things as I found them, and in the meantime, at least, keep old Sealand out of his sight!—Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair. You'll be in the way,[1] I suppose, if I send to you. I'll leave your old friend with you.—[*Aside*] Humphrey, don't let him stir, d'ye hear?—Your servant, your servant! *Exit* SIR JOHN

HUMPHREY. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master. I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match.—I must betray neither and yet deceive you both, for your common good. Heaven grant a good end of this matter!—But there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow.—You'll pardon me.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee, that lady is a woman of honor and virtue. You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent. But give me leave to say, too, this declaration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

HUMPHREY. Come, sir, I wholly understand you. You would engage my services to free you from this woman whom my master intends you, to make way in time for the woman you have really a mind to.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Honest Humphrey, you have always been a useful friend to my father and myself. I beg you, continue your good offices, and don't let us come to the necessity of a dispute; for, if we should dispute, I must either part with more than life. or lose the best of fathers.

HUMPHREY. My dear master, were I but worthy to know this secret that so near con-

[1] close by.

cerns you, my life, my all should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret. Your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain and tell you so.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee. Be patient, then, and hear the story of my heart.

HUMPHREY. I am all attention, sir.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travels my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

HUMPHREY. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady. She is of English birth. Her father's name was Danvers—a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favorable to his industry, and in six years' time restored him to his former fortunes. On this he sent directions over that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and, with her husband's sister only, and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage—for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life. She and her family, with all they had, were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though as such not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

HUMPHREY. Poor soul! Oh, the helpless infant!

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her. The captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married an Englishwoman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this, her little country-woman, presenting her, with all her dead mother's movables of value, to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

HUMPHREY. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for in his height of fortune this captain, too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea, and dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who, coming soon to take possession, there found (among his other riches) this blooming virgin at his mercy.

HUMPHREY. He durst not, sure, abuse his power?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her—in short, he loved. But when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered, too, his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood, seized on her little fortune as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me, by miracle, to relieve her.

HUMPHREY. 'Twas Providence, indeed. But pray, sir, after all this trouble how came this lady at last to England?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts descended to a composition, which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharged.

HUMPHREY. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England, where, no sooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

HUMPHREY. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. As my vital life dwells in my heart; and yet you see what I do to please my father—walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow.—But, Humphrey, you have your lesson.

HUMPHREY. Now, sir, I have but one material question—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Ask it freely.

HUMPHREY. Is it, then, your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I shall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her, I never once directly told her that I loved.

HUMPHREY. How was it possible to avoid it?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct that, till I have his consent to speak, I am determined, on that subject, to be dumb forever.

HUMPHREY. Well, sir, to your praise be it spoken, you are certainly the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain.

Enter TOM

TOM. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and if you are at leisure will be glad to wait on you.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Whenever he pleases.—Hold, Tom! did you receive no answer to my letter?

TOM. Sir, I was desired to call again, for I was told her mother would not let her be out of her sight. But about an hour hence, Mrs. Lettice said, I should certainly have one.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Very well. *Exit* TOM

HUMPHREY. Sir, I will take another opportunity: in the meantime, I only think it proper to tell you that, from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please to marry Lucinda, without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion.—Sir, your most obedient servant.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Honest Humphrey, continue but my friend in this exigence, and you shall always find me yours.

Exit HUMPHREY

—I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda—but I think it cannot fail; for at worst, were it possible she could take it ill, her resentment of my indifference may as probably occasion a delay as her taking it right.—Poor Myrtle, what terrors must he be in all this while! Since he knows she is offered to me, and refused to him, there is no conversing or taking any measures with him for his own service. But I ought to bear with my friend, and use him as one in adversity—

All his disquiets by my own I prove,
The greatest grief's perplexity in love.

Exit

ACT II

SCENE I. [BEVIL, JUNIOR'S *lodgings*]

Enter BEVIL, JUNIOR, *and* TOM

TOM. Sir, Mr. Myrtle.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Very well—do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter.

Exit TOM

Enter MYRTLE

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? Is there anything in this world deserves it?—You, who used to be so gay, so open, so vacant[1]!

MYRTLE. I think we have of late changed complexions. You, who used to be much the graver man, are now all air in your behavior.—But the cause of my concern may, for aught I know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are this very day—and your dress confirms me in it—to be married to Lucinda.

1 carefree.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You are not misinformed. —Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival till you hear me out. I shall disoblige the best of fathers if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her, for your own service, as you please. But I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying unless you help me to escape the match.

MYRTLE. Escape? Sir, neither her merit or her fortune are below your acceptance.— Escaping do you call it?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Dear sir, do you wish I should desire the match?

MYRTLE. No; but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that tho' I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit—

MYRTLE. Nay, dear Bevil, don't speak of her as if you loved her, neither.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Why, then, to give you ease at once, tho' I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

MYRTLE. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natured friend. When you acknowledge her merit and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness and cure my jealousy.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension, of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

MYRTLE. Cimberton! Hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb! For the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity and very little judgment, shows his strongest bias is avarice—which is so predominant in him that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Are you sure that is not affected? I have known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence than by—

MYRTLE. No, no! hang him, the rogue has no art; it is pure, simple insolence and stupidity.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Yet with all this, I don't take him for a fool.

MYRTLE. I own the man is not a natural[1]; he has a very quick sense, though very slow understanding. He says, indeed, many things that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Well, you may be sure of me if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, though those for mine with her are, by her father's orders, ready for signing. But it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

MYRTLE. Pshaw! a poor, troublesome woman. Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it; besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, Sir Geoffry, in the west.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Well, sir, and I can tell you that's the very point that is now laid before her counsel, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without his uncle's actual joining in it. Now pray consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes—as it soon must—to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father, too, to hear his proposals?

MYRTLE. There you are right, indeed; that must be provided against. Do you know who are her counsel?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Yes; for your service I have found out that, too. They are Sergeant Bramble and old Target—by the way, they are neither of them known in the family.

[1] a fool.

Now, I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false counsel upon her to delay and confound matters a little; besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

MYRTLE. As how, pray?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Why can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be old Bramble yourself?

MYRTLE. Ha! I don't dislike it.—But what shall I do for a brother in the case?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. What think you of my fellow Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic. All his part will be but to stutter heartily, for that's old Target's case. Nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock him were it not that his impertinence is the occasion of its breaking out to that degree. The conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

MYRTLE. I like it of all things. If you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for a while at least.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I'll warrant you success. —So far we are right, then. And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her is all you have to get over.

MYRTLE. Dear Bevil, though I know you are my friend, yet when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you or you to her; and therefore hope—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Dear Myrtle, I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but, be assured, I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire satisfaction.

MYRTLE. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can, though I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity. (*Going*)

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Then depend upon it, you have no chance against you.

MYRTLE. Nay, no ceremony—you know I must be going. *Exit* MYRTLE

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Well! This is another instance of the perplexities which arise, too, in faithful friendship. We must often in this life go on in our good offices, even under the displeasure of those to whom we do them, in compassion to their weaknesses and mistakes.—But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me. She has no support or comfort but in my fidelity, yet sees me daily pressed to marriage with another. How painful, in such a crisis, must be every hour she thinks on me! I'll let her see at least my conduct to her is not changed. I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for though the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman that is the pure delight of my eyes and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery—

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain. *Exit*

SCENE II. [INDIANA'S *lodgings*]

Enter ISABELLA *and* INDIANA

ISABELLA. Yes, I say 'tis artifice, dear child. I say to thee again and again, 'tis all skill and management.

INDIANA. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality—attended, dressed, and lodged like one—in my appearance abroad and my furniture at home, every way in the most sumptuous manner—and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

ISABELLA. Yes, yes.

INDIANA. And all this without so much as explaining to me that all about me comes from him!

ISABELLA. Aye, aye, the more for that. That keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

INDIANA. The more in him! He scorns the thought—

ISABELLA. Then he—he—he—

INDIANA. Well, be not so eager. If he is an ill man, let us look into his stratagems. Here is another of them. (*Showing a letter*) Here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank notes, with these words: "To pay for the set of dressing-plate which will be brought home to-morrow." Why, dear aunt, now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend, and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say anything to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present, I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life and the support of it—then, again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honor. When his eyes are cast another way and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love. Oh! could I tell you— 38

ISABELLA. Ah! you need not; I imagine all this for you.

INDIANA. This is my state of mind in his presence, and when he is absent, you are ever dinning my ears with notions of the arts of men—that his hidden bounty, his respectful conduct, his careful provision for me, after his preserving me from utmost misery, are certain signs he means nothing but to make I know not what of me. 48

ISABELLA. Oh! You have a sweet opinion of him, truly.

INDIANA. I have, when I am with him, ten thousand things, besides my sex's natural decency and shame, to suppress my heart, that yearns to thank, to praise, to say it loves him. I say, thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence I am entertained with nothing but your endeavors to tear this amiable image from my heart and, in its stead, to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honor. 61

ISABELLA. Ah, poor soul! has not his plot taken? Don't you die for him? Has not the way he has taken, been the most proper with you? Oh! oh! He has sense, and has judged the thing right. 66

INDIANA. Go on then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him.—Heigh! ho!

ISABELLA. Heigh! ho! indeed. It is better to say so, as you are now, than as many others are. There are, among the destroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble, who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. I will own to you, Mr. Bevil carries his hypocrisy the best of any man living, but still he is a man, and therefore a hypocrite. They have usurped an exemption from shame for any baseness, any cruelty towards us. They embrace without love; they make vows without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers to the crime wherein they pretend to be less guilty. 85

INDIANA. (*Aside*) That's truly observed. —But what's all this to Bevil?

ISABELLA. This it is to Bevil and all mankind. Trust not those who will think the worse of you for your confidence in them—serpents who lie in wait for doves. Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? Won't you doubt those who would contemn you for believing 'em? Take it from me, fair and natural dealing is to invite injuries; 'tis bleating to escape wolves who would devour you! Such is the world—(*Aside*) and such (since the behavior of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex. 100

INDIANA. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil; I will not doubt it. He has not spoke of it by an organ that is given to lying. His eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue; I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concerned for? my lesson is very short. If he takes me forever, my purpose of life is only to please him. If he leaves me (which Heaven avert), I know he'll do it nobly, and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happened to me.

ISABELLA. Aye, do, persist in your credulity! Flatter yourself that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love. 118

INDIANA. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil will but make themselves more ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

ISABELLA. O' my conscience, he has turned her head!—Come, come, if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

INDIANA. I am convinced he still designs it, and that nothing keeps him here but the necessity of coming to a breach with his father in regard to the match he has proposed him. Beside, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

ISABELLA. All sham—mere evasion; he is afraid if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

INDIANA. Wicked hopes! did I ever give him any such?

ISABELLA. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say, in your conscience, he has ever once offered to marry you?

INDIANA. No; but by his behavior I am convinced he will offer it the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honor, to make such a promise good to me.

ISABELLA. His honor!

INDIANA. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy, by these ungrateful jealousies of one to whom I am, and wish to be, obliged. For from his integrity alone I have resolved to hope for happiness.

ISABELLA. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it!

INDIANA. Let it be.—This is his hour of visiting me.

ISABELLA. Oh! to be sure, keep up your form; don't see him in a bed-chamber.—(*Apart*) This is pure prudence, when she is liable, wherever he meets her, to be conveyed where'er he pleases.

INDIANA. All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes. I live only when I'm with him. *Exit*

ISABELLA. Well, go thy ways, thou wilful innocent!—I once had almost as much love for a man who poorly left me to marry an estate, and I am now, against my will, what they call an old maid—but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me, only keep up the suspicion of it, to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms. *Exit*

Re-enter INDIANA, *speaking to a* Servant

INDIANA. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in.—Design! impossible! A base designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice. And yet, since the late rumor of his marriage, he seems more reserved than formerly; he sends in too, before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure—such new respects may cover coldness in the heart. It certainly makes me thoughtful.—I'll know the worst at once; I'll lay such fair occasions in his way that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation, for these doubts are insupportable!—But see, he comes, and clears them all.

Enter BEVIL

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Madam, your most obedient! I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night; 'twas very late before we parted, but 'twas your own fault. I never saw you in such agreeable humor.

INDIANA. I am extremely glad we were both pleased, for I thought I never saw you better company.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Me, madam! you rally; I said very little.

INDIANA. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal; and, when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Then it's pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

INDIANA. If I had your talent or power, to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and you pretend to something more than the agreeable.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. If I might be vain of anything in my power, madam, 'tis that my understanding, from all your sex, has marked you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

INDIANA. Should I think I deserve this, 'twere enough to make my vanity forfeit the very esteem you offer me.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. How so, madam?

INDIANA. Because esteem is the result of reason, and to deserve it from good sense, the height of human glory. Nay, I had rather a man of honor should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You certainly distinguish right, madam; love often kindles from external merit only.

INDIANA. But esteem rises from a higher source—the merit of the soul.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. True—and great souls only can deserve it. (*Bowing respectfully*)

INDIANA. Now I think they are greater still, that can so charitably part with it.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is, that I esteem you—as I ought.

INDIANA. (*Aside*) As he ought! still more perplexing! He neither saves nor kills myhope.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks. Let's find some other subject.—Pray, how did you like the opera last night?

INDIANA. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Oh, your servant, madam. But pray tell me; you now, who are never partial to the fashion, I fancy must be the properest judge of a mighty dispute among the ladies—that is, whether *Crispo* or *Griselda* is the more agreeable entertainment.

INDIANA. With submission now I cannot be a proper judge of this question.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. How so, madam?

INDIANA. Because I find I have a partiality for one of them.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Pray which is that?

INDIANA. I do not know. There's something in that rural cottage of Griselda, her forlorn condition, her poverty, her solitude, her resignation, her innocent slumbers, and that lulling *dolce sogno*[1] that's sung over her; it had an effect upon me that—in short I never was so well deceived at any of them.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Oh! Now then, I can account for the dispute. Griselda, it seems, is the distress of an injured, innocent woman; Crispo, that only of a man in the same condition. Therefore the men are mostly concerned for Crispo, and, by a natural indulgence, both sexes for Griselda.

INDIANA. So that judgment, you think, ought to be for one, though fancy and complaisance have got ground for the other. Well, I believe you will never give me leave to dispute with you on any subject; for I own, *Crispo* has its charms for me too, though in the main, all the pleasure the best opera gives us is but mere sensation. Methinks it's pity the mind can't have a little more share in the entertainment. The music's certainly fine, but, in my thoughts, there's none of your composers come up to old Shakespeare and Otway.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. How, madam! Why, if a woman of your sense were to say this in a drawing-room—

Enter a Servant

SERVANT. Sir, here's Signor Carbonelli says he waits your commands in the next room.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Apropos! you were saying yesterday, madam, you had a mind to hear him. Will you give him leave to entertain you now?

INDIANA. By all means; desire the gentleman to walk in. *Exit* Servant

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I fancy you will find something in this hand that is uncommon.

1 sweet song.

INDIANA. You are always finding ways, Mr. Bevil, to make life seem less tedious to me. 307

Enter Music Master

—When the gentleman pleases.

(*After a Sonata is played*, BEVIL *waits on the* Master *to the door, etc.*)

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You smile, madam, to see me so complaisant to one whom I pay for his visit. Now, I own, I think it is not enough barely to pay those whose talents are superior to our own (I mean such talents as would become our condition, if we had them). Methinks we ought to do something more than barely gratify them for what they do at our command only because their fortune is below us. 318

INDIANA. You say I smile. I assure you it was a smile of approbation; for indeed, I cannot but think it the distinguishing part of a gentleman to make his superiority of fortune as easy to his inferiors as he can.—(*Aside*) Now once more to try him.—I was saying just now, I believed you would never let me dispute with you, and I daresay it will always be so. However, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate between my aunt and me, just before you came hither; she would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman, but for his own sake. 333

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Well, madam! Indeed, I can't but be of her mind.

INDIANA. What, though he should maintain and support her, without demanding anything of her, on her part? 338

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Why, madam, is making an expense in the service of a valuable woman (for such I must suppose her), though she should never do him any favor—nay, though she should never know who did her such service—such a mighty heroic business?

INDIANA. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Dear madam, why so? 'tis but, at best, a better taste in expense. To bestow upon one whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation, to be conscious, that from his superfluity, an innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations and sorrows of life! That he sees satisfaction, health, and gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her (as that I will suppose too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible)—I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect, alas, what mighty matter is there in all this? 360

INDIANA. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship!

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Disinterested! I can't think him so; your hero, madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be and I believe very many are. He is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in sensations. He is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him. Why, madam, a greater expense than all this men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses. 372

INDIANA. Can you be sincere in what you say?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately. 377

INDIANA. No, that he does not.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Nor cards, nor dice.

INDIANA. No.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Nor bottle companions.

INDIANA. No. 382

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Nor loose women.

INDIANA. No, I'm sure he does not.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Take my word then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of these kind[1] of demands, there's no such pre-eminence in this as you imagine. Nay, this way of expense you speak of is what exalts, and raises him that has a taste for it; and, at the same time, his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence. 392

INDIANA. But still I insist his having no private interest in the action, makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Dear madam, I never knew you more mistaken. Why, who can be

[1] An early instance of a common error.

more a usurer than he who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart; to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket? What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of a humane disposition where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity. What then must it be when we serve an object of merit, of admiration! 411

INDIANA. Well! the more you argue against it the more I shall admire the generosity.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Nay, nay.—Then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument. I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and begone while we are friends and before things are brought to an extremity. *Exit, carelessly* 421

Enter ISABELLA

ISABELLA. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

INDIANA. I protest, I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good or bad designs upon me. 428

ISABELLA. Ah! dear niece! don't be in fear of both! I'll warrant you, you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

INDIANA. You please me when you tell me so, for if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honor. 435

ISABELLA. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other. I saw the respectful downcast of his eye when you caught him gazing at you during the music. He, I warrant, was surprised, as if he had been taken stealing your watch. Oh! the undissembled, guilty look! 442

INDIANA. But did you observe any such thing, really? I thought he looked most charmingly graceful! How engaging is modesty in a man when one knows there is a great mind within! So tender a confusion! and yet, in other respects, so much himself, so collected, so dauntless, so determined!

ISABELLA. Ah! niece! there is a sort of bashfulness which is the best engine to carry on a shameless purpose. Some men's modesty serves their wickedness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety. But I will own to you, there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover. But it's all a perplexity—till—till—till— 458

INDIANA. Till what?

ISABELLA. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes.—And that I will be convinced of before I sleep; for you shall not be deceived. 463

INDIANA. I'm sure I never shall if your fears can guard me. In the meantime I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his. 467

As conscious honor all his actions steers,
So conscious innocence dispels my fears.

Exeunt

ACT III

SCENE [I]. SEALAND'S *house*

Enter TOM, *meeting* PHILLIS

TOM. Well, Phillis—[*Aside*] What, with a face as if you had never seen me before! What a work have I to do now? She has seen some new visitant at their house, whose airs she has caught and is resolved to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance thro' before she'll answer this plain question. Videlicet, have you delivered my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aloud,*] (*looking steadfastly at her*)—Well, madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not, in the general, be any other than what I am. I would not be a bit wiser, a bit

richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter than I am at this instant.

PHILLIS. Did ever anybody doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

TOM. I am, indeed. The thing I have least reason to be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty. Perhaps if I were rich I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

PHILLIS. (*Aside*) How prettily was that said! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word.

TOM. I should, perhaps, have been stupidly above her, had I not been her equal, and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant, for hire—I am my mistress's from choice, would she but approve my passion.

PHILLIS. I think it's the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of the anguish, if you really do suffer any.

TOM. Ah, Phillis! can you doubt, after what you have seen?

PHILLIS. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard. But since I am at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me; how you fell in love with me; and what you have suffered or are ready to suffer for me.

TOM. (*Aside*) Oh, the unmerciful jade! when I am in haste about my master's letter. But I must go through it.—Ah! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion I was first surprised! It was on the 1st of April, 1715, I came into Mr. Sealand's service; I was then a hobbledehoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favorite handmaid of the housekeeper. At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean; the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

PHILLIS. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

TOM. You know not, I warrant you—you could not guess what surprised me! You took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close and breathed upon the glass; and when my lips approached, a dirty cloth you rubbed against my face, and hid your beauteous form! When I again drew near, you spit, and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

PHILLIS. What silly thoughts you men have!

TOM. We were Pyramus and Thisbe—but ten times harder was my fate. Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her—saw my Thisbe in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between—for there was more; there was her will against me. Would she but yet relent! Oh, Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

PHILLIS. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

TOM. Oh! my charming Phillis, if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer—but, dearest creature, consider our miserable state!

PHILLIS. How! Miserable?

TOM. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love—with that generous passion in the heart, to be sent to and fro on errands, called, checked, and rated for the meanest trifles! O Phillis! you don't know how many china cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break. You have broke my fortune as well as my heart.

PHILLIS. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you that I believe your master writes and you speak the best of any men in the world. Never was woman so well pleased with a letter as my young lady was with his; and this is an answer to it.

(*Gives him a letter*)

TOM. This was well done, my dearest; consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves by closing their affairs. It will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tene-

ment, out of their large possessions. Whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves; one acre with Phillis would be worth a whole county without her.

PHILLIS. Oh, could I but believe you!

TOM. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips. (*Kisses her*)

PHILLIS. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom!

TOM. And will closer, in due time. But I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you. Then, Phillis, consider how I must be revenged—look to it—of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best but coy compliances.

PHILLIS. O Tom, you grow wanton and "sensual," as my lady calls it; I must not endure it. Oh! foh! you are a man—an odious, filthy, male creature! You should behave, if you had a right sense or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton—with distance and indifference; or, let me see, some other becoming hard word—with seeming in-in-inadvertency, and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey.—But hush! the ladies are coming.—Good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone. Lard, we have been fooling and toying, and not considered the main business of our masters and mistresses.

TOM. Why, their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

PHILLIS. Well remembered parchments; my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress, though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepared between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and, I believe, my mistress herself has signed and sealed, in her heart, to Mr. Myrtle. —Did I not bid you kiss me but once, and be gone? But I know you won't be satisfied.

TOM. (*Kissing her hand*) No, you smooth creature, how should I?

PHILLIS. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality. (*They salute formally*)

TOM. Pox of all this state!

(*Offers to kiss her more closely*)

PHILLIS. No, prithee, Tom, mind your business! We must follow that interest which will take, but endeavor at that which will be most for us and we like most. Oh, here is my young mistress! (TOM *taps her neck behind, and kisses his fingers*) Go, ye liquorish fool! *Exit* TOM

Enter LUCINDA

LUCINDA. Who was that you were hurrying away?

PHILLIS. One that I had no mind to part with.

LUCINDA. Why did you turn him away then?

PHILLIS. For your ladyship's service—to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

LUCINDA. Why, has he so little love for his master?

PHILLIS. No; but he hath so much love for his mistress.

LUCINDA. But I thought I heard him kiss you. Why did you suffer that?

PHILLIS. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love. We servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, are forced to deal and bargain by way of sample, and therefore as we have no parchments or wax necessary in our agreements, we squeeze with our hands and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises.

LUCINDA. But can't you trust one another without such earnest down?

PHILLIS. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

LUCINDA. Thou art a pert, merry hussy.

PHILLIS. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

LUCINDA. You grow impertinent.

PHILLIS. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr. Bevil, nor what you all, especially my

lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you already—nay, you are married actually as far as people of quality are. 212

LUCINDA. How is that?

PHILLIS. You have different beds in the same house.

LUCINDA. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him. But my father, in his heart, still has a mind to him, were it not for this woman they talk of; and I am apt to imagine he is married to her, or never designs to marry at all. 223

PHILLIS. Then Mr. Myrtle—

LUCINDA. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me and my affections; who is to have this body of mine without them, it seems, is nothing to me. My mother says 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says a maid, rigidly virtuous, though she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man when she sees him in a third place. 236

PHILLIS. That is more than the severity of a nun, for not to see when one may, is hardly possible; not to see when one can't, is very easy. At this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen who— 242

LUCINDA. Mamma says the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him; then you are to observe and take notice of him, because then you are to obey him. 249

PHILLIS. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as obey?

LUCINDA. To love is a passion: 'tis a desire, and we must have no desires.—Oh, I cannot endure the reflection! With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience have I been exposed and offered to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain. 258

PHILLIS. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation. 261

LUCINDA. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb. As fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person have been the tittle-tattle of the whole town. What is this world come to?—no shame left—to be bartered for like the beasts of the field, and that in such an instance as coming together to an entire familiarity and union of soul and body! Oh! and this without being so much as well-wishers to each other, but for increase of fortune. 273

PHILLIS. But madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all. Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly—nay, has (whether you know it or no) been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

LUCINDA. How do you get all this intelligence? 287

PHILLIS. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great Britain—the art of list'ning, madam, for your ladyship's service. 291

LUCINDA. I shall soon know as much as you do. Leave me, leave me, Phillis; begone!—Here, here! I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no one else. 297

Exit PHILLIS

—How unhappy are we who are born to great fortunes! No one looks at us with indifference, or acts towards us on the foot of plain dealing; yet by all I have been heretofore offered to or treated for, I have been used with the most agreeable of all abuses—flattery. But now, by this phlegmatic fool I'm used as nothing, or a mere thing. He,

forsooth, is too wise, too learned, to have any regard for desires, and I know not what the learned oaf calls sentiments of love and passion.—Here he comes with my mother.—It's much if he looks at me, or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other movable in the room. 312

Enter MRS. SEALAND, *and* MR. CIMBERTON

MRS. SEALAND. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honorable house in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be. 318

CIMBERTON. Why, really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewildered in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood. They have no ideas of happiness but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst. 326

LUCINDA. (*Aside*) With how much reflection he is a coxcomb!

CIMBERTON. And in truth, madam, I have considered it as a most brutal custom that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame, to bed, as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species as openly as to the preservation of the individual. 336

LUCINDA. (*Aside*) She that willingly goes to bed to thee must have no shame, I'm sure.

MRS. SEALAND. O cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! But indeed, it is too true there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best governed families, "My master and lady have gone to bed"; one does not know but it might have been said of one's self! (*Hiding her face with her fan*)

CIMBERTON. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise; among the Lacedæmonians the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom. Their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth, and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us under the audacious word "marriage." 355

MRS. SEALAND. Oh, had I lived in those days and been a matron of Sparta, one might with less indecency have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one under the confusion of our modern, barefaced manner! 361

LUCINDA. (*Aside*) And yet, poor woman, she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it.

MRS. SEALAND. We will talk then of business.—That girl walking about the room there is to be your wife. She has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother. 369

CIMBERTON. I have observed her; her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance speak her very—

LUCINDA. Very what?

CIMBERTON. If you please, madam—to set her a little that way. 375

MRS. SEALAND. Lucinda, say nothing to him; you are not a match for him. When you are married, you may speak to such a husband when you're spoken to. But I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

CIMBERTON. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man.—Ha! aye, the vermilion of her lips.

LUCINDA. Pray, don't talk of me thus.

CIMBERTON. The pretty enough—pant of her bosom. 393

LUCINDA. Sir!—Madam, don't you hear him?

CIMBERTON. Her forward chest—

LUCINDA. Intolerable!

CIMBERTON. High health—

LUCINDA. The grave, easy impudence of him! 400

CIMBERTON. Proud heart—

LUCINDA. Stupid coxcomb!

CIMBERTON. I say, madam, her impatience while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

LUCINDA. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable!

CIMBERTON. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

LUCINDA. I have no veins, no arteries.

MRS. SEALAND. O child! hear him, he talks finely! He's a scholar; he knows what you have.

CIMBERTON. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing.—Now, I am considering her, on this occasion, but as one that is to be pregnant.

LUCINDA. (*Aside*) The familiar, learned, unseasonable puppy!

CIMBERTON. —And pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly. I fear I shan't, for many years, have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

LUCINDA. Monster! there's no bearing it! The hideous sot! there's no enduring it, to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale!

CIMBERTON. At sale! She's very illiterate—but she's very well limbed too.—Turn her in; I see what she is.

MRS. SEALAND. Go, you creature, I am ashamed of you. *Exit* LUCINDA, *in a rage*

CIMBERTON. No harm done!—You know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observed to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings (*Adjusting himself at the glass*)—and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in—and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all considered.

MRS. SEALAND. I grant it, and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other "accomplishment," as the common world think 'em, because she is not polite.

CIMBERTON. Madam, I know your exalted understanding, abstracted, as it is, from vulgar prejudices, will not be offended when I declare to you, I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony, or a plantation. This young woman's beauty and constitution will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

MRS. SEALAND. (*Aside*) With all that wit and learning, how considerate! What an economist!—Sir, I cannot make her any other than she is, or say she is much better than the other young women of this age, or fit for much besides being a mother; but I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet ours here at this hour, concerning this joining in the deed; which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

CIMBERTON. No, no, no, indeed, madam, it is not usual; and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

MRS. SEALAND. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton, but she is for aught I see as well as the daughter of anybody else.

CIMBERTON. That is very true, madam.

Enter a Servant, *who whispers* [*to*] MRS. SEALAND

MRS. SEALAND. The lawyers are come, and now we are to hear what they have resolved as to the point whether it's necessary that Sir Geoffry should join in the settlement, as being what they call in the remainder. But, good cousin, you must have patience with 'em. These lawyers, I am told, are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber counsel, the other a pleader. The conveyancer is slow, from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore shunned the bar, but extremely passionate and impatient of contradiction. The other is as warm as he, but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

CIMBERTON. You mean old Sergeant Target and Counsellor Bramble? I have heard of 'em.

MRS. SEALAND. The same. Show in the gentlemen. *Exit* Servant

Re-enter Servant, *introducing* MYRTLE *and* TOM *disguised as* BRAMBLE *and* TARGET

MRS. SEALAND. Gentlemen, this is the party concerned—Mr. Cimberton, and I hope you have considered of the matter.

TARGET. Yes, madam, we have agreed that it must be by indent—dent—dent—dent—

BRAMBLE. Yes, madam, Mr. Sergeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleased to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party; old Cimberton, in the year 1619, says, in that ancient roll in Mr. Sergeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had, will more at large appear—

TARGET. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands, it appears that—

BRAMBLE. Mr. Sergeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody, but speak to the titles in your own deeds. I shall not show that deed till my client is in town.

CIMBERTON. You know best your own methods.

MRS. SEALAND. The single question is, whether the entail is such that my cousin, Sir Geoffry, is necessary in this affair.

BRAMBLE. Yes, as to the lordship of Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Grimgribber.

TARGET. I say that Gr—gr— that Gr—gr—Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us; that is to say, the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—tr—Triplet.

BRAMBLE. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him. But we are willing to waive that, and give him a valuable consideration. But we shall not purchase what is in us forever, as Grimgribber is, at the rate, as we guard against the contingent of Mr. Cimberton having no son. Then, we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family—yet—

TARGET. Sir, Gr—gr—ber is—

BRAMBLE. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclined to hear that in all its parts. But, sir, I see very plainly what you are going into. I tell you, it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

TARGET. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say—

BRAMBLE. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument; but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton. I am of opinion that, according to the instruction of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail and then create a new estate for the heirs general.

TARGET. Sir, I have not patience to be told that, when Gr—gr—ber—

BRAMBLE. I will allow it you, Mr. Sergeant; but there must be the word "heirs" forever, to make such an estate as you pretend.

CIMBERTON. I must be impartial, though you are counsel for my side of the question. Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him.—But, gentlemen, I believe you have both considered this matter, and are firm in your different opinions. 'Twere better, therefore, you proceeded according to the particular sense of each of you, and gave your thoughts distinctly in writing. And do you see, sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say in English.

BRAMBLE. Why, what is all we have been saying? In English!—Oh! but I forgot myself; you're a wit. But, however, to please you, sir, you shall have it, in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

CIMBERTON But I would have it, sir, without delay.

BRAMBLE. That, sir, the law will not admit of. The Courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment obliged to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the hall to attend one of 'em at least; the rest would take it ill **else.**

Therefore, I must leave what I have said to Mr. Sergeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, sir. *Exit* BRAMBLE

TARGET. Agreed, agreed.

CIMBERTON. Mr. Bramble is very quick; he parted a little abruptly.

TARGET. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr—gr—ber.

MRS. SEALAND. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you. I shall send to you, Mr. Sergeant, as soon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjusted.

TARGET. I shall be at my chambers, at my usual hours. *Exit*

CIMBERTON. Madam, if you please, I'll now attend you to the tea table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good sense, after all this law and gibberish.

MRS. SEALAND. 'Tis a wonderful thing, sir, that men of professions do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say in the language of the rest of the world. Sure, they'd find their account in it.

CIMBERTON. They might, perhaps, madam, with people of your good sense; but with the generality 'twould never do. The vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge if they were exposed to naked view.

Truth is too simple, of all art bereaved:
Since the world will—why, let it be deceived.

Exeunt

ACT IV

SCENE I. BEVIL, JUNIOR'S *lodgings*

BEVIL, JUNIOR, *with a letter in his hand, followed by* TOM

TOM. Upon my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter. I never opened my lips to Mr. Myrtle about anything of your honor's letter to Madam Lucinda.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. What's the fool in such a fright for?—I don't suppose you did. What I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle showed any suspicion, or asked you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning.

TOM. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him. What did he say to you?

TOM. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dressed for the lawyer's part your honor was pleased to put me upon, he asked me if I had been at Mr. Sealand's this morning. So I told him, sir, I often went thither—because, sir, if I had not said that, he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Very well!—(*Aside*) The fellow's caution, I find, has given him this jealousy.—Did he ask you no other questions?

TOM. Yes, sir; now I remember, as we came away in the hackney coach from Mr. Sealand's, "Tom," says he, "as I came in to your master this morning, he bade you go for an answer to a letter he had sent. Pray, did you bring him any?" says he. "Ah!" says I, "sir, your honor is pleased to joke with me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no."

BEVIL, JUNIOR. And so by showing him you could you told him you had one?

TOM. (*Confused*) Sir—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to! How poorly has he used art with a servant to make him betray his master!—Well, and when did he give you this letter for me?

TOM. Sir, he writ it before he pulled off his lawyer's gown, at his own chambers.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Very well; and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

TOM. He looked a little out of humor, sir, and said it was very well.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I knew he would be grave upon't.—Wait without.

TOM. Hum! 'gad, I don't like this; I am afraid we are all in the wrong box here. *Exit* TOM

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present; but I have never

been more thoroughly disturbed. This hot man! to write me a challenge, on supposed artificial dealing, when I professed myself his friend! I can live contented without glory, but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first let me consider Lucinda's letter again. (*Reads*) 63

Sir,

I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it than the courtship of him who, I fear, will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter till hereafter, and am your most obliged humble servant, 75

Lucinda Sealand

Well, but the postscript— (*Reads*)

I won't, upon second thoughts, hide anything from you. But my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cured by a careful and unblamable conduct. 85

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confidant, and put herself, in a kind, under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and so serve him and her, by disobeying her in the article of secrecy more than I should by complying with her directions.—But then this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honor in the world; how must I preserve myself from imputations there? He'll, forsooth, call it or think it fear, if I explain without fighting. —But his letter—I'll read it again— 100

Sir,

You have used me basely in corresponding and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you, which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you and the injured 107

Charles Myrtle

Enter TOM

TOM. Mr. Myrtle, sir. Would your honor please to see him?

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Why, you stupid creature! Let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings? Show him up. 113

Exit TOM

—Well, I am resolved upon my carriage to him. He is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for—but here he is. 117

Enter TOM, *introducing* MYRTLE

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honor.—(*To* TOM) But sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room.

Exit TOM

—Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me? 122

MYRTLE. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—"I have yours," "I shall be at home." 132

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style; but as I design everything in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face, and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

MYRTLE. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness, and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine—to your own safety, not consideration of your friend. 145

BEVIL, JUNIOR. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle?

MYRTLE. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at; but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced, to the breach of all laws, both divine and human. 154

MYRTLE. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil, it would be a good first principle in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries as—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. As what? 159

MYRTLE. As fear of answering for 'em.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. As fear of answering for 'em! But that apprehension is just or blamable according to the object of that fear. I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence—I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against Him, and immediately to urge on to His tribunal. 169

MYRTLE. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this show of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life—the hopes of possessing Lucinda. But consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector. 179

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Sir, show me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authorised, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will show thee—to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage—slight, inconsiderate man!—There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger; and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

MYRTLE. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You perhaps, who know not what it is to love—who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours, and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honor—you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man, goes on like common business, and in the interim you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance—your convenient, your ready Indiana. 204

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man; and I'm excusable, in the guard of innocence (or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more), to accept your invitation, and observe your letter.—Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter TOM

TOM. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak aloud. 212

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Yes; go call a coach.

TOM. Sir—master—Mr. Myrtle—friends—gentlemen—what d'ye mean? I am but a servant, or—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Call a coach. 217

Exit TOM

—(*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other—Aside*) Shall I (though provoked to the uttermost) recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine? (*Shutting the door—To* MYRTLE) I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer, when perhaps too much regard to a false point of honor makes me prolong that suffering. 233

MYRTLE. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Why, then, would you ask it first that way? 238

MYRTLE. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. True; but let me tell you, I have saved you from the most exquisite distress, even tho' you had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that I am sure to have found this letter about a man you had killed would have been worse than death to yourself.—Read it.—(*Aside*) When he is thoroughly mortified and shame has got the better of jealousy, when he has seen himself throughly, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda.

MYRTLE. [*Aside*] With what a superiority has he turned the injury on me, as the aggressor! I begin to fear I have been too far transported.—"A treaty in our family!" is not that saying too much? I shall relapse.—But I find (on the postscript) "something like jealousy." With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer?—Oh! Bevil, with what words shall I—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. There needs none; to convince is much more than to conquer.

MYRTLE. But can you—

BEVIL, JUNIOR. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me, in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! Thy face is altered to that of another man—to that of my companion, my friend.

MYRTLE. That I could be such a precipitant wretch!

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Pray, no more!

MYRTLE. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends, for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say again and again, how much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with. What had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was and as incapable of reason!

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

MYRTLE. Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice. And yet how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear.

Betrayed by honor and compelled by shame,
They hazard being, to preserve a name:
Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,
Till plunged in sad eternity they wake.

Exeunt

SCENE II. *St. James's Park*

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL *and* MR. SEALAND

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house. Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort.

MR. SEALAND. Genealogy and descent! Sir, there has been in our family a very large one. There was Galfrid the father of Edward, the father of Ptolomey, the father of Crassus, the father of Earl Richard, the father of Henry the Marquis, the father of Duke John—

SIR JOHN BEVIL. What, do you rave, Mr. Sealand?—All these great names in your family?

MR. SEALAND. These? Yes, sir. I have heard my father name 'em all, and more.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Aye, sir? and did he say they were all in your family?

MR. SEALAND. Yes, sir, he kept 'em all. He was the greatest cocker[1] in England. He said Duke John won him many battles, and never lost one.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Oh, sir, your servant! you are laughing at my laying any stress upon descent; but I must tell you, sir, I never knew anyone but he that wanted that advantage turn it into ridicule.

MR. SEALAND. And I never knew anyone who had many better advantages, put that into his account.—But, Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of everything you are

[1] cockfighter.

pleased to put into your bill of rates on this occasion; yet, sir, I have made no objections to your son's family. 'Tis his morals that I doubt.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit may be no stain to a gentleman's honor.

MR. SEALAND. Sir John, the honor of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader. We are talking of a marriage, and in such a case the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honor or credit of her lover that he is a keeper—

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

MR. SEALAND. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman.

MR. SEALAND. Sir, I never saw a man that wenched soberly and discreetly, that ever left it off; the decency observed in the practice hides, even from the sinner, the iniquity of it. They pursue it, not that their appetites hurry 'em away, but, I warrant you, because 'tis their opinion they may do it.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Were what you suspect a truth—do you design to keep your daughter a virgin till you find a man unblemished that way?

MR. SEALAND. Sir, as much a cit[1] as you take me for, I know the town and the world: and give me leave to say, that we merchants are a species of gentry that have grown into the world this last century, and are as honorable, and almost as useful, as you landed folks that have always thought yourselves so much above us; for your trading, forsooth, is extended no farther than a load of hay or a fat ox. You are pleasant people, indeed, because you are generally bred up to be lazy; therefore, I warrant you, industry is dishonorable.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Be not offended, sir; let us go back to our point.

MR. SEALAND. Oh! not at all offended, but I don't love to leave any part of the account unclosed. Look you, Sir John, comparisons are odious, and more particularly so on occasions of this kind, when we are projecting races that are to be made out of both sides of the comparisons.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. But my son, sir, is, in the eye of the world, a gentleman of merit.

MR. SEALAND. I own to you, I think him so.—But, Sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters. I lost, in my earlier years, a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant. This makes me, perhaps, overcautious to preserve the second bounty of providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child. You'll pardon me; my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Why, that's one very good reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

MR. SEALAND. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this *incognita*, that can be objected to him. Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

MR. SEALAND. Very wise men have been so enslaved, and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether moved from the demand of the world or slighter reasons, such a husband soils with his wife for a month perhaps—then good b'w'ye, madam, the show's over.—Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,—

> And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
> Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turned a-grazing, and that must be the case when—

SIR JOHN BEVIL. But pray consider, sir, my son—

[1] Of the city, as distinguished from the gentry.

MR. SEALAND. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him; but, one way or other, he is, or has been, certainly engaged to her. I am therefore resolved, this very afternoon, to visit her. Now, from her behavior or appearance I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

MR. SEALAND. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it.—Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain—and so, your servant. *Exit*

SIR JOHN BEVIL. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness.

Enter HUMPHREY

—Oh! Humphrey, you are come in a seasonable minute. I want to talk to thee, and to tell thee that my head and heart are on the rack about my son.

HUMPHREY. Sir, you may trust his discretion; I am sure you may.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Why, I do believe I may, and yet I'm in a thousand fears when I lay this vast wealth before me; when I consider his prepossessions, either generous to a folly, in an honorable love, or abandoned, past redemption, in a vicious one—and, from the one or the other, his insensibility to the fairest prospect towards doubling our estate. A father who knows how useful wealth is, and how necessary, even to those who despise it—I say a father, Humphrey, a father cannot bear it.

HUMPHREY. Be not transported, sir; you will grow incapable of taking any resolution in your perplexity.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Yet, as angry as I am with him, I would not have him surprised in anything. This mercantile, rough man may go grossly into the examination of this matter, and talk to the gentlewoman so as to—

HUMPHREY. No, I hope, not in an abrupt manner.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. No, I hope not! Why, dost thou know anything of her, or of him—or of anything of it—or all of it?

HUMPHREY. My dear master, I know so much that I told him this very day you had reason to be secretly out of humor about her.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Did you go so far? Well, what said he to that?

HUMPHREY. His words were, looking upon me steadfastly: "Humphrey," says he, "that woman is a woman of honor."

SIR JOHN BEVIL. How! Do you think he is married to her, or designs to marry her?

HUMPHREY. I can say nothing to the latter, but he says he can marry no one without your consent while you are living.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. If he said so much, I know he scorns to break his word with me.

HUMPHREY. I am sure of that.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. You are sure of that? Well! that's some comfort. Then I have nothing to do but to see the bottom of this matter during this present ruffle.—Oh, Humphrey—

HUMPHREY. You are not ill, I hope, sir.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Yes, a man is very ill that's in a very ill-humor. To be a father is to be in care for one whom you oftener disoblige than please, by that very care. Oh! that sons could know the duty to a father before they themselves are fathers!—But, perhaps, you'll say now that I am one of the happiest fathers in the world; but, I assure you, that of the very happiest is not a condition to be envied.

HUMPHREY. Sir, your pain arises, not from the thing itself, but your particular sense of it. You are overfond—nay, give me leave to say, you are unjustly apprehensive from your fondness. My master Bevil never disobliged you, and he will—I know he will—do everything you ought to expect.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. He won't take all this money with this girl.—For aught I know,

he will, forsooth, have so much moderation as to think he ought not to force his liking for any consideration.

HUMPHREY. He is to marry her, not you; he is to live with her, not you, sir.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. I know not what to think. But I know nothing can be more miserable than to be in this doubt.—Follow me; I must come to some resolution.

Exeunt

SCENE III. BEVIL, JUNIOR'S *lodgings*

Enter TOM *and* PHILLIS

TOM. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall; he is now with my master in the library.

PHILLIS. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present nor I so handsomely take anything from him before you. It would not be decent.

TOM. It will be very decent, indeed, for me to retire and leave my mistress with another man!

PHILLIS. He is a gentleman and will treat one properly.

TOM. I believe so; but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you. I'll call him to you. *Exit* TOM

PHILLIS. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle from mere punctilio! I could, any hour of the day, get her to her lover, and would do it—but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him; but, if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it. I must, therefore, do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable; if she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Enter MYRTLE *and* TOM

—Oh, sir! You and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and no attempt to set her at liberty or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

MYRTLE. Tom has been telling—but what is to be done?

PHILLIS. What is to be done—when a man can't come at his mistress! Why, can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

MYRTLE. How, Mrs. Phillis!

PHILLIS. Aye; let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing when there were no other way to come at me!

TOM. I am obliged to you, madam.

PHILLIS. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love? Oh! were I a man—

MYRTLE. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

PHILLIS. Only be at once what, one time or other, you may be, and wish to be, or must be!

MYRTLE. Dear girl, talk plainly to me, and consider I, in my condition, can't be in very good humor.—You say, to be at once what I must be.

PHILLIS. Aye, aye. I mean no more than to be an old man; I saw you do it very well at the masquerade. In a word, old Sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton. He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb—though as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

TOM. Come, to the business, and don't keep the gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

PHILLIS. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection. Go and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffry. There is not one there but myself knows his person; I was born in the parish where he is lord of the manor.[1] I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do not hesitate, but come hither; they will think you bring a certain

[1] A parish official in country districts.

security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring —Mr. Myrtle! Leave the rest to me. I leave this with you, and expect.—They don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town, which you had as good be forever if you lose this opportunity. I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home. 88

MYRTLE. My dear Phillis.

(*Catches and kisses her, and gives her money*)

PHILLIS. O fie! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence. But I'll carry 'em to the right owner. (TOM *kisses her—To* TOM) Come, see me downstairs and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. 95

Exeunt TOM *and* PHILLIS

MYRTLE. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient. The extravagance of it will make me less suspected, and it will give me opportunity to assert my own right to Lucinda, without whom I cannot live.—But I am so mortified at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil. He must think meanly of me—I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this. Yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda under her present perplexities; and sure— 107

The next delight to transport, with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care. *Exit*

ACT V

SCENE I. SEALAND'S *house*

Enter PHILLIS, *with lights, before* MYRTLE, *disguised like old* SIR GEOFFRY; *supported by* MRS. SEALAND, LUCINDA, *and* CIMBERTON

MRS. SEALAND. Now I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? *Exit* MRS. SEALAND

MYRTLE. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up our name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms, join with you in a settlement to that purpose—though I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house. 12

LUCINDA. [*Aside*] Deuce on 'em! Am I a merchant because my father is?

MYRTLE. But is he directly a trader at this time? 16

CIMBERTON. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir; he trades to all parts of the world.

MYRTLE. We never had one of our family before who descended from persons that did anything. 21

CIMBERTON. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honor of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink her into our name, and no harm done. 25

MYRTLE. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved.—Is this the young thing?

CIMBERTON. Yes, sir.

PHILLIS. [*Aside to* LUCINDA] Good madam, don't be out of humor, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance.—Hear them out. 32

MYRTLE. Can't I see her nearer? My eyes are but weak.

PHILLIS. [*Continues*] Besides, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. *Exit*

CIMBERTON. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you and to see you nearer!—Approach, sir. 43

MYRTLE. By your leave, young lady. (*Puts on spectacles*)—Cousin Cimberton! She has exactly that sort of neck and bosom for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered anything in women below the chin. 50

LUCINDA. (*Aside*) What a very odd situation am I in!—though I cannot but be diverted at the extravagance of their humors, equally unsuitable to their age.—Chin, quotha? I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha! ha! 57

MYRTLE. Madam, I would not willingly offend, but I have a better glass.
(*Pulls out a large one*)

Enter PHILLIS

PHILLIS. (*To* CIMBERTON) Sir, my lady desires to show the apartment to you that she intends for Sir Geoffry.

CIMBERTON. Well, sir, by that time you will have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there.—I will wait on you again.

Exeunt CIMBERTON *and* PHILLIS

MYRTLE. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, though we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

LUCINDA. [*Aside*] There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity.

MYRTLE. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

LUCINDA. Surprising!—I hope, then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous as to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

MYRTLE. This hand of mine shall never be employed to sign anything against your good and happiness.

LUCINDA. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments, but there is a gentleman in the world whose gratitude will, I am sure, be worthy of the favor.

MYRTLE. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your power to give.

LUCINDA. Name them and command them.

MYRTLE. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will, with open arms, receive him.

LUCINDA. As willingly as his heart could wish it.

MYRTLE. [*Advancing*] Thus, then, he claims your promise.—O Lucinda!

LUCINDA. O! a cheat! a cheat! a cheat!

MYRTLE. Hush, 'tis I! 'tis I, your lover—Myrtle himself, madam.

LUCINDA. Oh, bless me! what a rashness and folly to surprise me so.—But hush—my mother.

Enter MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, *and* PHILLIS

MRS. SEALAND. How now! what's the matter?

LUCINDA. O madam! as soon as you left the room my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cried out for help to support him and conduct him to his chamber.

MRS. SEALAND. That was kindly done!—Alas! sir, how do you find yourself?

MYRTLE. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life—pray, lead me! Oh! I was talking here—(pray carry me)—to my cousin Cimberton's young lady—

MRS. SEALAND. (*Aside*) My cousin Cimberton's young lady! How zealous he is, even in his extremity, for the match!—a right Cimberton!

(CIMBERTON *and* LUCINDA *lead him, as one in pain*)

CIMBERTON. Pox! Uncle, you will pull my ear off.

LUCINDA. Pray, uncle! you will squeeze me to death.

MRS. SEALAND. No matter, no matter—he knows not what he does.—Come, sir, shall I help you out?

MYRTLE. By no means! I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here.

They lead him off

PHILLIS. But pray, madam, does your ladyship intend that Mr. Cimberton shall really marry my young mistress at last? I don't think he likes her.

MRS. SEALAND. That's not material! Men of his speculation are above desires. But be as it may, now I have given old Sir Geoffry the trouble of coming up to sign and seal, with what countenance can I be off?

PHILLIS. As well as with twenty others, madam. It is the glory and honor of a great fortune to live in continual treaties, and still to break off. It looks great, madam.

MRS. SEALAND. True, Phillis—yet to return our blood again into the Cimbertons is an honor not to be rejected.—But were not you saying that Sir John Bevil's creature, Humphrey, has been with Mr. Sealand?

PHILLIS. Yes, madam; I overheard them agree that Mr. Sealand should go himself and visit this unknown lady that Mr. Bevil is so great with; and if he found nothing there to fright him, that Mr. Bevil should still marry my young mistress.

MRS. SEALAND. How! nay, then, he shall find she is my daughter as well as his. I'll follow him this instant and take the whole family along with me. The disputed power of disposing of my own daughter shall be at an end this very night. I'll live no longer in anxiety for a little hussy that hurts my appearance wherever I carry her, and for whose sake I seem to be at all regarded, and that in the best of my days.

PHILLIS. Indeed, madam, if she were married, your ladyship might very well be taken for Mr. Sealand's daughter.

MRS. SEALAND. Nay, when the chit has not been with me, I have heard the men say as much. I'll no longer cut off the greatest pleasure of a woman's life (the shining in assemblies) by her forward anticipation of the respect that's due to her superior. She shall down to Cimberton Hall—she shall—she shall!

PHILLIS. I hope, madam, I shall stay with your ladyship.

MRS. SEALAND. Thou shalt, Phillis, and I'll place thee then more about me.—But order chairs immediately; I'll be gone this minute. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. *Charing Cross*

Enter MR. SEALAND *and* HUMPHREY

MR. SEALAND. I am very glad, Mr. Humphrey, that you agree with me that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

HUMPHREY. I am, indeed, of that opinion; for there is no artifice, nothing concealed, in our family, which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

MR. SEALAND. Master Humphrey, I shall not be rude, though I design to be a little abrupt and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise.

HUMPHREY. That's the door, sir; I wish you success.—(*While* HUMPHREY *speaks*, SEALAND *consults his table book.*)—[*Aside*] I am less concerned what happens there, because I hear Mr. Myrtle is well lodged as old Sir Geoffry. So I am willing to let this gentleman employ himself here, to give them time at home; for I am sure 'tis necessary for the quiet of our family Lucinda were disposed of out of it, since Mr. Bevil's inclination is so much otherwise engaged.

Exit

MR. SEALAND. I think this is the door. (*Knocks*) I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, though I make an errand to begin discourse. (*Knocks again, and enter a foot-boy*) So, young man! is your lady within?

BOY. Alack, sir! I am but a country boy—I dant know whether she is or noa; but an you'll stay a bit, I'll goa and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

MR. SEALAND. Why, sirrah, though you are a country boy, you can see, can't you? You know whether she is at home, when you see her, don't you?

BOY. Nay, nay, I'm not such a country lad neither, master, to think she's at home because I see her. I have been in town but a month, and I lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

MR. SEALAND. Why, sirrah! have you learnt to lie already?

BOY. Ah, master! things that are lies in the country are not lies at London. I begin to know my business a little better than so.—But an you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain—she can make bold to ask my lady herself.

MR. SEALAND. Oh! then, she is within, I find, though you dare not say so.

Boy. Nay, nay! that's neither here nor there: what's matter whether she is within or no, if she has not a mind to see anybody?

Mr. Sealand. I can't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but, however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in; I'll see what I can do for you.

Mr. Sealand. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child. But I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house.

Boy. Such a house! Sir, you han't seen it yet. Pray walk in.

Mr. Sealand. Sir, I'll wait upon you.

Exeunt

Scene III. Indiana's *house*

Enter Isabella

Isabella. What anxiety do I feel for this poor creature! What will be the end of her? Such a languishing, unreserved passion for a man that at last must certainly leave or ruin her—and perhaps both! Then the aggravation of the distress is, that she does not believe he will—not but, I must own, if they are both what they would seem, they are made for one another as much as Adam and Eve were, for there is no other of their kind but themselves.

Enter Boy

—So, Daniel! what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would speak with my lady.

Isabella. Sirrah! don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day, and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isabella. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before.—Well! be it who it will, let him come up to me.

Exit Boy, *and re-enters with* Mr. Sealand; Isabella *looks amazed*

Mr. Sealand. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surprised to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and—

Isabella. I am indeed surprised!—(*Aside*) I see he does not know me.

Mr. Sealand. You are very prettily lodged here, madam; in troth, you seem to have everything in plenty.—(*Aside, and looking about*) A thousand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

Isabella. (*Apart*) Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty than of a girl of fourteen—he's almost still the same. But alas! I find by other men, as well as himself, I am not what I was. As soon as he spoke, I was convinced 'twas he. How shall I contain my surprise and satisfaction! He must not know me yet.

Mr. Sealand. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance, but there is a young lady here with whom I have a particular business to discourse, and I hope she will admit me to that favor.

Isabella. Why, sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr. Sealand. That, madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isabella. Well, sir! you shall see her.—(*Aside*) I find he knows nothing yet, nor shall from me. I am resolved I will observe this interlude—this sport of nature and of fortune.—You shall see her presently, sir, for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. *Exit*

Mr. Sealand. As a mother! right; that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies, who lend out beauty for hire to young gentlemen that have pressing occasions.—But here comes the precious lady herself. In troth, a very sightly woman—

Enter Indiana

Indiana. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Mr. Sealand. Yes, madam, there came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which

is payable to-morrow, and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

INDIANA. Sir, was that necessary?

MR. SEALAND. No, madam; but to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

INDIANA. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness, or absurdity, at least.—Who's there?—Sir, if you pay the money to a servant, 'twill be as well.

MR. SEALAND. Pray, madam, be not offended. I came hither on an innocent, nay, a virtuous design; and, if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in a friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

INDIANA. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you. I am composed again; be free, say on—(*Aside*)—what I am afraid to hear.

MR. SEALAND. I feared, indeed, an unwarranted passion here, but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplished a lady as your sense and mien bespeak; but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify—

INDIANA. Sir, you are going into very great errors; but as you are pleased to say you see something in me that has changed at least the color of your suspicions, so has your appearance altered mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concerned you to inquire into my affairs and character.

MR. SEALAND. [*Aside*] How sensibly, with what an air she talks!

INDIANA. Good sir, be seated, and tell me tenderly—keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way acquaint me—why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless—(*Weeping*) But I beg your pardon. Though I am an orphan, your child is not; and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither.—I'll be composed; pray go on, sir.

MR. SEALAND. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster, to injure such a woman?

INDIANA. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me. My support is from his bounty.

MR. SEALAND. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful.

INDIANA. Still, still you will persist in that error. But my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is designed a husband by his good father, and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture. He was here this morning, dressed beyond his usual plainness—nay, most sumptuously—and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

MR. SEALAND. I own he was intended such; but madam, on your account, I have determined to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied from your own mouth of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

INDIANA. His actions, sir, his eyes, have only made me think he designed to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanor made me misinterpret all. 'Twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me; he never made one amorous advance to me. His large heart and bestowing hand have only helped the miserable; nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care and the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favors.

MR. SEALAND. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am methinks afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talked never so distinctly—he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

INDIANA. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor. No, sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues. If to bestow without a prospect of return; if to delight in supporting what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested—if these actions, sir, can in a careful parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give yours, sir—give her to my honest, generous Bevil! What have I to do but sigh, and weep, and rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains, or, hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts and broken accents my strange, strange story!

MR. SEALAND. Take comfort, madam.

INDIANA. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and shrieking to demand of fate why—why was I born to such variety of sorrows.

MR. SEALAND. If I have been the least occasion— 191

INDIANA. No, 'twas Heaven's high will I should be such. To be plundered in my cradle! tossed on the seas! and even there an infant captive! to lose my mother, hear but of my father! to be adopted! lose my adopter! then plunged again into worse calamities! 198

MR. SEALAND. An infant captive!

INDIANA.—Yet then, to find the most charming of mankind once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress; to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favors; to support my very life in a way that stole, at the same time, my very soul itself from me! 206

MR. SEALAND. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

INDIANA.—Yet then, again, this very man to take another without leaving me the right, the pretence, of easing my fond heart with tears! For, oh! I can't reproach him, though the same hand that raised me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

MR. SEALAND. Dear lady! Oh, yet one moment's patience; my heart grows full with your affliction.—But yet there's something in your story that— 218

INDIANA. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

MR. SEALAND. Do not think so. Pray answer me: does Bevil know your name and family? 223

INDIANA. Alas, too well! Oh, could I be any other thing than what I am—I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been—

(*In her disorder she throws away a bracelet, which* SEALAND *takes up, and looks earnestly on it*)

MR. SEALAND. Ha! what's this? My eyes are not deceived!—It is, it is the same! the very bracelet which I bequeathed to my wife at our last mournful parting! 232

INDIANA. What said you, sir? Your wife! Whither does my fancy carry me? What means this unfelt motion at my heart?—And yet, again my fortune but deludes me; for if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand; but my lost father's name was— 238

MR. SEALAND. Danvers—was it not?

INDIANA. What new amazement! That is, indeed, my family.

MR. SEALAND. Know, then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand. 245

Enter ISABELLA

ISABELLA. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face (yours, sir, I well remember); gaze on and read in me your sister, Isabella.

MR. SEALAND. My sister! 250

ISABELLA. But here's a claim more tender yet—your Indiana, sir, your long-lost daughter.

MR. SEALAND. Oh, my child! my child!

INDIANA. All-gracious Heaven! Is it possible? Do I embrace my father? 255

MR. SEALAND. And I do hold thee?—These passions are too strong for utterance. Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way.—O my sister! (*Embracing her*)

ISABELLA. Now, dearest niece, my groundless fears, my painful cares no more shall vex thee. If I have wronged thy noble lover with too much suspicions, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

MR. SEALAND. O! make him, then, the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy. Fly this instant! tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favor! Tell him I have now a daughter to bestow which he no longer will decline; that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the merit which his father seeks, be wanting. Tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance.

Exit ISABELLA

—My dearest Indiana!

(*Turns and embraces her*)

INDIANA. Have I then, at last, a father's sanction on my love?—his bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

MR. SEALAND. Oh, my child! how are our sorrows past, o'erpaid by such a meeting! Though I have lost so many years of soft paternal dalliance with thee, yet, in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation!—And yet, again, the merit of thy lover—

INDIANA. Oh! had I spirits left to tell you of his actions!—how strongly filial duty has suppressed his love; and how concealment still has doubled all his obligations: the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

MR. SEALAND. How laudable is love when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him—

INDIANA. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Enter ISABELLA, *with* SIR JOHN BEVIL, BEVIL, JUNIOR, MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, MYRTLE, *and* LUCINDA

SIR JOHN BEVIL. (*Entering*) Where, where's this scene of wonder? Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occasion, our mutual happiness.—Your good sister, sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, filled us with surprise and joy! Now all exceptions are removed; my son has now avowed his love, and turned all former jealousies and doubts to approbation; and, I am told, your goodness has consented to reward him.

MR. SEALAND. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune, with pleasure only as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love. Let him be provident, but let me be happy.—(*Embracing* INDIANA) My ever-destined, my acknowledged wife!

INDIANA. Wife! Oh, my ever loved! My lord! my master!

SIR JOHN BEVIL. I congratulate myself, as well as you, that I had a son who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

MR. SEALAND. O Sir John! how vain, how weak is human prudence! What care, what foresight, what imagination could contrive such blest events, to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

CIMBERTON. (*To* MRS. SEALAND) I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair. If you please, we'll take another opportunity.

MRS. SEALAND. Let us have patience, sir.

CIMBERTON. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, madam.

MYRTLE. O sir, I am not in haste.

(*During this*, BEVIL, JUNIOR, *presents* LUCINDA *to* INDIANA)

MR. SEALAND. But here—here's our general benefactor!—Excellent young man, that could be at once a lover to her beauty and a parent to her virtue.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself, in the only instance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

MR. SEALAND. She is his without reserve; I beg he may be sent for. Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent,

yet there is, since I last saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

CIMBERTON. I hope, sir, your lady has concealed nothing from me?

MR. SEALAND. Troth, sir, nothing but what was concealed from myself—another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

CIMBERTON. How, Mr. Sealand? Why, then, if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her. I was in treaty for the whole; but if that is not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain. Sir, I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

MYRTLE. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. (*Discovers himself*)

ALL. Mr. Myrtle!

MYRTLE. And I beg pardon of the whole company that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry, only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her; which, if her parents will ratify, as they once favored my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

LUCINDA. Generous man!

MR. SEALAND. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

LUCINDA. Mr. Myrtle, though you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more because I bring you less.

MYRTLE. We have much more than we want, and I am glad any event has contributed to the discovery of our real inclinations to each other.

MRS. SEALAND. (*Aside*) Well; however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of, anyway.

BEVIL, JUNIOR. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers!

MYRTLE. Dear Bevil, you are born to triumph over me! But now our competition ceases; I rejoice in the preëminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

SIR JOHN BEVIL. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example. Your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit, and the several difficulties you have struggled with, evidently show—

Whate'er the generous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies.

Exeunt

EPILOGUE

BY MR. WELSTED

INTENDED TO BE SPOKEN BY INDIANA

Our author, whom entreaties cannot move,
Spite of the dear coquetry that you love,
Swears he'll not frustrate (so he plainly means)
By a loose epilogue, his decent scenes.
Is it not, sirs, hard fate I meet to-day,
To keep me rigid still beyond the play?
And yet I'm saved a world of pains that way.
I now can look, I now can move at ease,
Nor need I torture these poor limbs to please;
Nor with the hand or foot attempt surprise,
Nor wrest my features, nor fatigue my eyes.
Bless me! what freakish gambols have I played!
What motions tried, and wanton looks betrayed!
Out of pure kindness all! to over-rule
The threatened hiss, and screen some scribbling fool.
With more respect I'm entertained to-night:
Our author thinks I can with ease delight.
My artless looks while modest graces arm,
He says, I need but to appear, and charm.
A wife so formed, by these examples bred,
Pours joy and gladness 'round the marriage bed;
Soft source of comfort, kind relief from care,
And 'tis her least perfection to be fair.
The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies,
A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes.

FINIS

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

By John Gay

Nos haec novimus esse nihil

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Peachum
Lockit
Macheath
Filch
Jeremy Twitcher
Crook-Fingered Jack
Wat Dreary
Robin of Bagshot
Nimming Ned
Harry Padington
Matt of the Mint
Ben Budge
} Macheath's gang
Beggar
Player

Constables, Drawers, Turnkey, etc.

Women

Mrs. Peachum
Polly Peachum
Lucy Lockit
Diana Trapes
Mrs. Coaxer
Dolly Trull
Mrs. Vixen
Betty Doxy
Jenny Diver
Mrs. Slammekin
Suky Tawdry
Molly Brazen
} Women of the town

INTRODUCTION

[*Enter*] Beggar [*and*] Player

Beggar. If poverty be a title to poetry, I am sure nobody can dispute mine. I own myself of the company of beggars, and I make one at their weekly festivals at St. Giles's. I have a small yearly salary for my catches, and am welcome to a dinner there whenever I please, which is more than most poets can say.

Player. As we live by the muses, 'tis but gratitude in us to encourage poetical merit wherever we find it. The muses, contrary to all other ladies, pay no distinction to dress, and never partially mistake the pertness of embroidery for wit, nor the modesty of want for dulness. Be the author who he will, we push his play as far as it will go. So (though you are in want) I wish you success heartily.

Beggar. This piece, I own, was originally writ for the celebrating the marriage of James Chanter and Moll Lay, two most excellent ballad-singers. I have introduced the similes that are in your celebrated operas: the Swallow, the Moth, the Bee, the Ship, the Flower, etc. Besides, I have a prison-scene, which the ladies always reckon charmingly pathetic. As to the parts, I have observed such a nice impartiality to our two ladies, that it is impossible for either of them to take offence. I hope I may be forgiven, that I have not made my opera throughout unnatural, like those in vogue; for I have no recitative: excepting this, as I have consented to have neither prologue nor epilogue, it must be allowed an opera in all its forms. The piece indeed hath been heretofore frequently presented by ourselves in our great room at St. Giles's, so that I cannot too often acknowledge your charity in bringing it now on the stage.

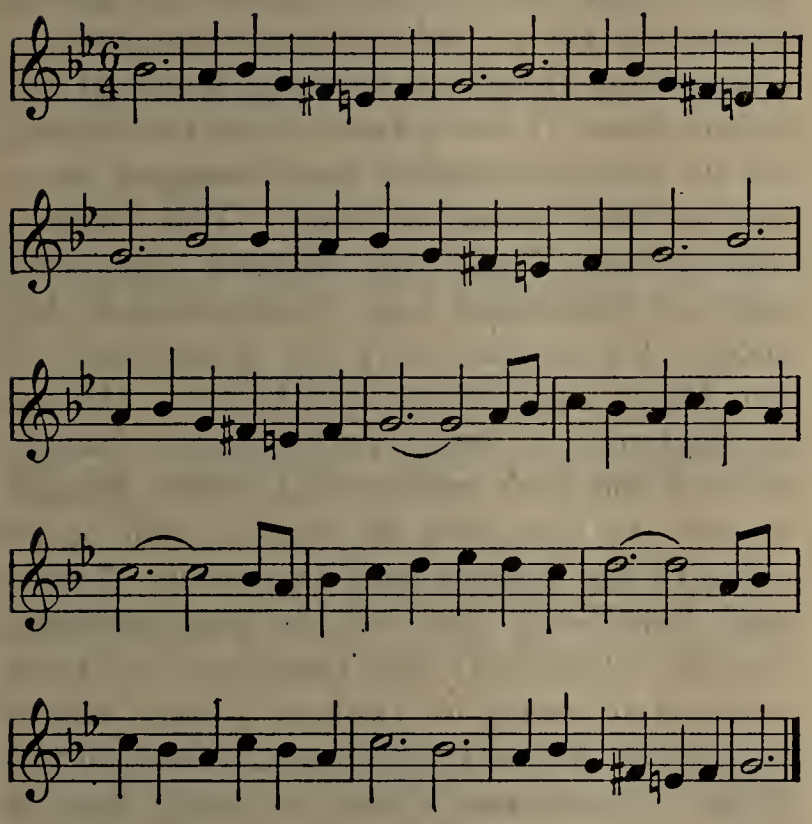
Player. But I see 'tis time for us to withdraw; the actors are preparing to begin. Play away the overture. *Exeunt*

ACT I

SCENE I. PEACHUM'S *house*

PEACHUM *sitting at a table with a large book of accounts before him*

AIR I—*An old woman clothed in gray, etc.*



Through all the employments of life,
  Each neighbor abuses his brother;
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife:
  All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat,
  The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
  Thinks his trade as honest as mine.

A lawyer is an honest employment; so is mine. Like me, too, he acts in a double capacity, both against rogues and for 'em; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them.

SCENE II

PEACHUM, FILCH

FILCH. Sir, Black Moll hath sent word her trial comes on in the afternoon, and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off. 4

PEACHUM. Why, she may plead her belly at worst; to my knowledge she hath taken care of that security. But as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the evidence. 9

FILCH. Tom Gagg, sir, is found guilty.

PEACHUM. A lazy dog! When I took him the time before, I told him what he would come to if he did not mend his hand. This is death without reprieve. I may venture to book him. (*Writes*) For Tom Gagg, forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know that I'll save her from transportation, for I can get more by her staying in England. 18

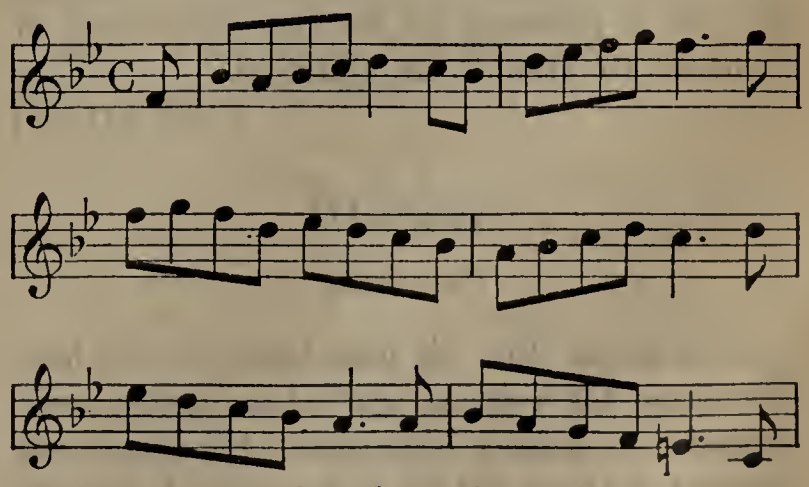
FILCH. Betty hath brought more goods into our lock[1] to-year, than any five of the gang; and in truth, 'tis a pity to lose so good a customer. 22

PEACHUM. If none of the gang take her off, she may, in the common course of business, live a twelve-month longer. I love to let women 'scape. A good sportsman always lets the hen partridges fly, because the breed of the game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no reward; there is nothing to be got by the death of women—except our wives. 31

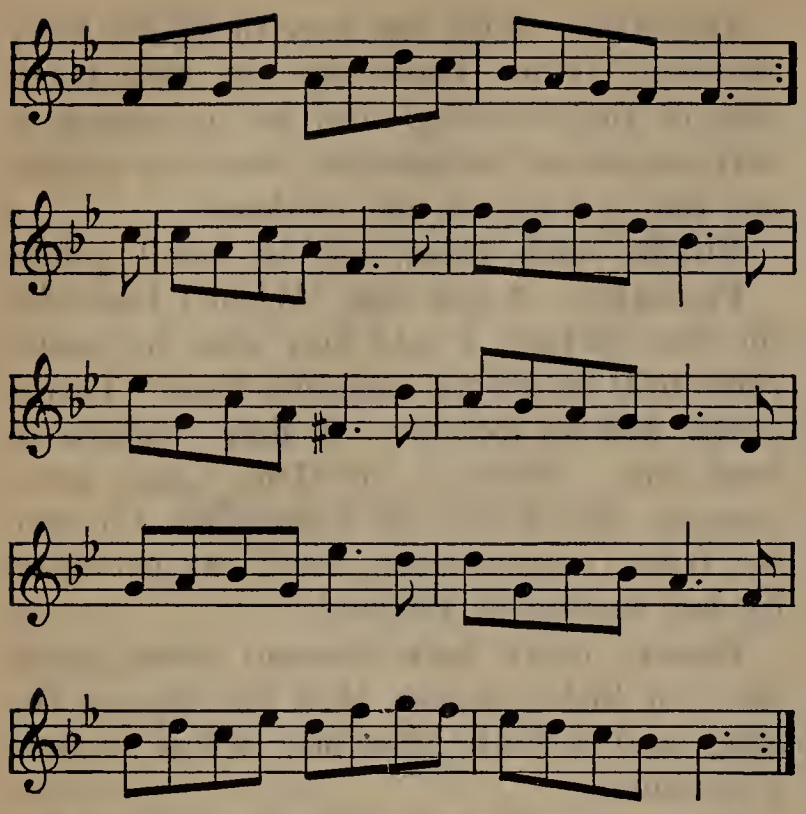
FILCH. Without dispute, she is a fine woman! 'Twas to her I was obliged for my education, and (to say a bold word) she hath trained up more young fellows to the business than the gaming-table. 36

PEACHUM. Truly, Filch, thy observation is right. We and the surgeons are more beholden to women than all the professions besides. 40

AIR II—*The bonny gray-eyed morn, etc.*



1 Cf. modern "fence."



FILCH.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind,
By her we first were taught the wheedling arts;
Her very eyes can cheat; when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our money with our hearts.
For her, like wolves by night we roam for prey,
And practise ev'ry fraud to bribe her charms;
For suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

PEACHUM. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy one way or other.

FILCH. When a gentleman is long kept in suspense, penitence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, certainty gives a man a good air upon his trial, and makes him risk another without fear or scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a pleasure to be the messenger of comfort to friends in affliction.

[*Exit* FILCH]

SCENE III

PEACHUM

PEACHUM. But 'tis now high time to look about me for a decent execution against next sessions. I hate a lazy rogue, by whom one can get nothing till he is hanged. A register of the gang, (*Reading*) "Crook-fingered Jack. A year and a half in the service." Let me see how much the stock owes to his industry; one, two, three, four, five gold watches, and seven silver ones.—A mighty clean-handed fellow!—Sixteen snuff-boxes, five of them of true gold. Six dozen of handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted swords, half a dozen of shirts, three tie-periwigs, and a piece of broadcloth.—Considering these are only the fruits of his leisure hours, I don't know a prettier fellow, for no man alive hath a more engaging presence of mind upon the road. "Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will"—an irregular dog, who hath an underhand way of disposing of his goods. I'll try him only for a sessions[1] or two longer upon his good behavior. "Harry Padington"—a poor petty-larceny rascal, without the least genius; that fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit. "Slippery Sam"—he goes off the next sessions, for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment. "Matt of the Mint"—listed not above a month ago, a promising sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way: somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder. "Tom Tipple"—a guzzling, soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand. A cart is absolutely necessary for him. "Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon, alias Bob Bluff, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty—"

SCENE IV

PEACHUM, MRS. PEACHUM

MRS. PEACHUM. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him. You know, my dear, he's a favorite customer of mine. 'Twas he made me a present of this ring.

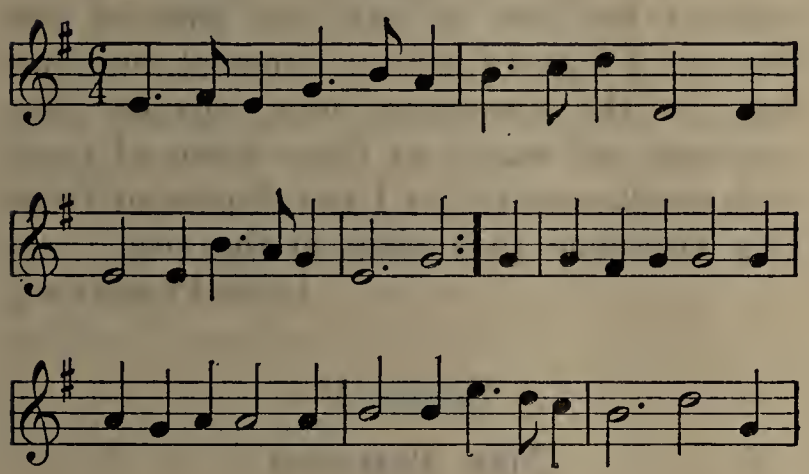
PEACHUM. I have set his name down in the black list, that's all, my dear; he spends his life among women, and as soon as his

[1] term of court.

money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward, and there's forty pound lost to us forever.

MRS. PEACHUM. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women indeed are bitter bad judges in these cases, for they are so partial to the brave that they think every man handsome who is going to the camp or the gallows.

AIR III—*Cold and raw, etc.*



If any wench Venus's girdle wear,
  Though she be never so ugly;
Lilies and roses will quickly appear,
  And her face look wond'rous smugly.
Beneath the left ear so fit but a cord,
  (A rope so charming a zone is!)
The youth in his cart hath the air of a lord,
  And we cry, There dies an Adonis!

But really, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of men than at present. We have not had a murder among them all, these seven months. And truly, my dear, that is a great blessing.

PEACHUM. What a dickens is the woman always a-whimp'ring about murder for? No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do?

MRS. PEACHUM. If I am in the wrong, my dear, you must excuse me, for nobody can help the frailty of an over-scrupulous conscience.

PEACHUM. Murder is as fashionable a crime as a man can be guilty of. How many fine gentlemen have we in Newgate every year, purely upon that article! If they have wherewithal to persuade the jury to bring it in manslaughter, what are they the worse for it? So, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was Captain Macheath here this morning, for the bank-notes he left with you last week?

MRS. PEACHUM. Yes, my dear; and though the bank has stopped payment, he was so cheerful and so agreeable! Sure there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the captain! If he comes from Bagshot at any reasonable hour he hath promised to make one with Polly and me, and Bob Booty, at a party of quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the captain rich?

PEACHUM. The captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man that proposes to get money by play should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

MRS. PEACHUM. Really, I am sorry upon Polly's account the captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

PEACHUM. Upon Polly's account! What, a plague, does the woman mean?—Upon Polly's account!

MRS. PEACHUM. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

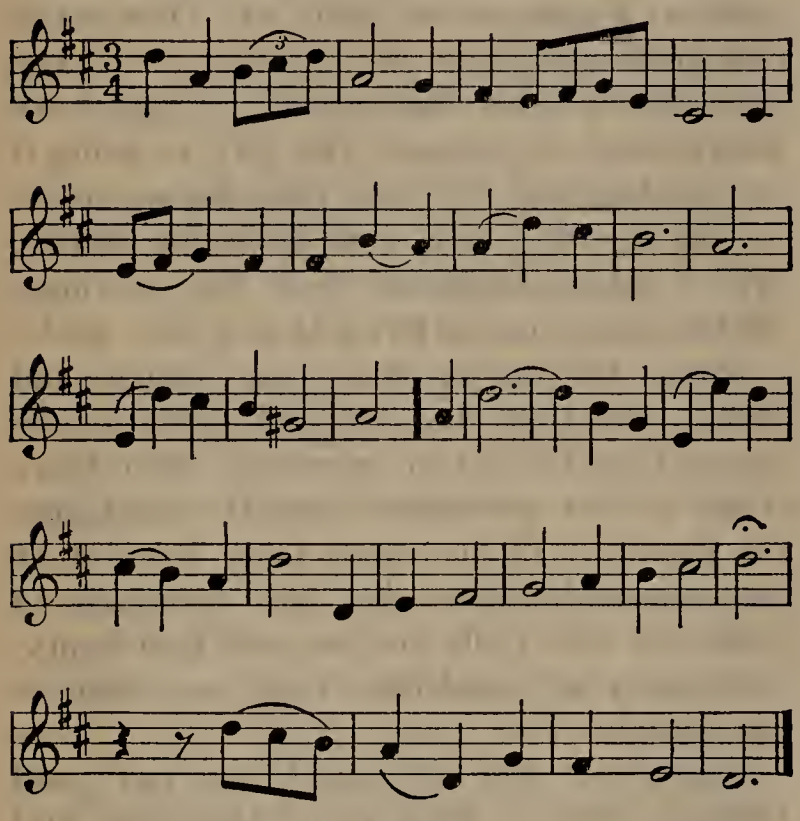
PEACHUM. And what then?

MRS. PEACHUM. If I have any skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

PEACHUM. And what then? You would not be so mad to have the wench marry him! Gamesters and highwaymen are generally very good to their whores, but they are very devils to their wives.

MRS. PEACHUM. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself? Poor girl, I am in the utmost concern about her. 89

AIR IV—*Why is your faithful slave disdained? etc.*



If love the virgin's heart invade,
How, like a moth, the simple maid
Still plays about the flame!
If soon she be not made a wife,
Her honor 's singed, and then, for life,
She's—what I dare not name. 95

PEACHUM. Look ye, wife. A handsome wench in our way of business is as profitable as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood to grant every liberty but one. You see I would indulge the girl as far as prudently we can—in anything but marriage! After that, my dear, how shall we be safe? Are we not then in her husband's power? For a husband hath the absolute power over all a wife's secrets but her own. If the girl had the discretion of a court lady, who can have a dozen young fellows at her ear without complying with one, I should not matter it; but Polly is tinder, and a spark will at once set her on a flame. Married! If the wench does not know her own profit, sure she knows her own pleasure better than to make herself a property! My daughter to me should be, like a court lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbors. 118

MRS. PEACHUM. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the girl. She loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties in the view of interest.

PEACHUM. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the meantime, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this afternoon to a chap in the city. 130

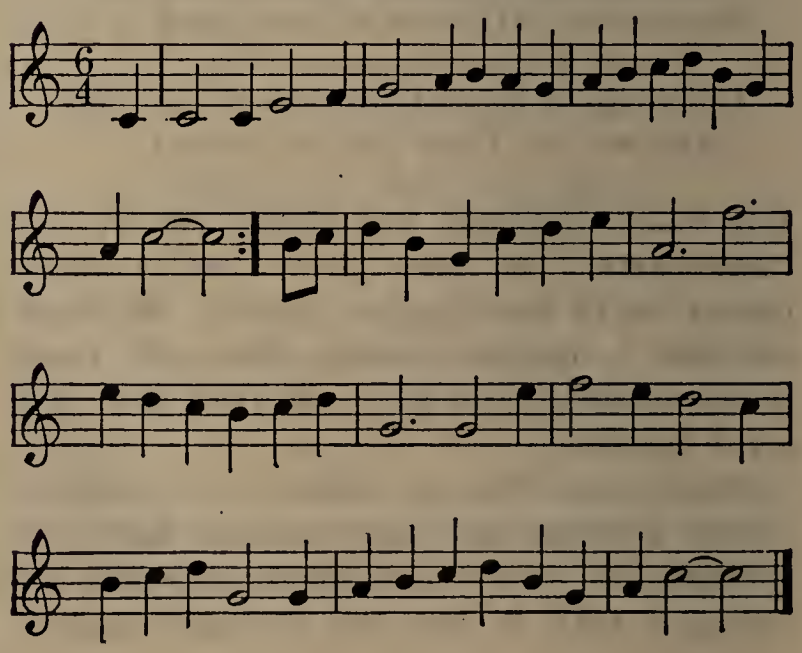
[*Exit* PEACHUM]

SCENE V

MRS. PEACHUM

MRS. PEACHUM. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband! Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her sex, and love only her husband? And why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all observation, make her the less followed by other men? All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property. 9

AIR V—*Of all the simple things we do, etc.*



A maid is like the golden ore,
  Which hath guineas intrinsical in't;
Whose worth is never known, before
  It is tried and imprest in the mint.
A wife's like a guinea in gold,
  Stampt with the name of her spouse;
Now here, now there; is bought, or is sold;
  And is current in every house.

Scene VI

Mrs. Peachum, Filch

Mrs. Peachum. Come hither, Filch. I am as fond of this child as though my mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler.—If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I plied at the opera, madam; and considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches, made a tolerable hand on't. These seven handkerchiefs, madam.

Mrs. Peachum. Colored ones, I see. They are of sure sale from our warehouse at Redriff among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs. Peachum. Set in gold! A pretty encouragement this to a young beginner.

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold watch. Pox take the tailors for making the fobs so deep and narrow! It stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, madam, I fear, I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth, so that every now and then (since I was pumped[1]) I have thoughts of taking up and going to sea.

Mrs. Peachum. You should go to Hockley in the Hole and to Marybone, child, to learn valor. These are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear as well as shame.—Poor lad! how little does he know as yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact I'll insure thee from being hanged; and going to sea, Filch, will come time enough upon a sentence of transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, ev'n go to your book, and learn your catechism; for really a man makes but an ill figure in the ordinary's paper, who cannot give a satisfactory answer to his questions. But, hark you, my lad. Don't tell me a lie; for you know I hate a liar. Do you know of anything that hath passed between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you or to Miss Polly—for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs. Peachum. But when the honor of our family is concerned—

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly if ever she come to know that I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own honor by betraying anybody.

Mrs. Peachum. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a most delicious glass of a cordial that I keep for my own drinking.

[*Exeunt*]

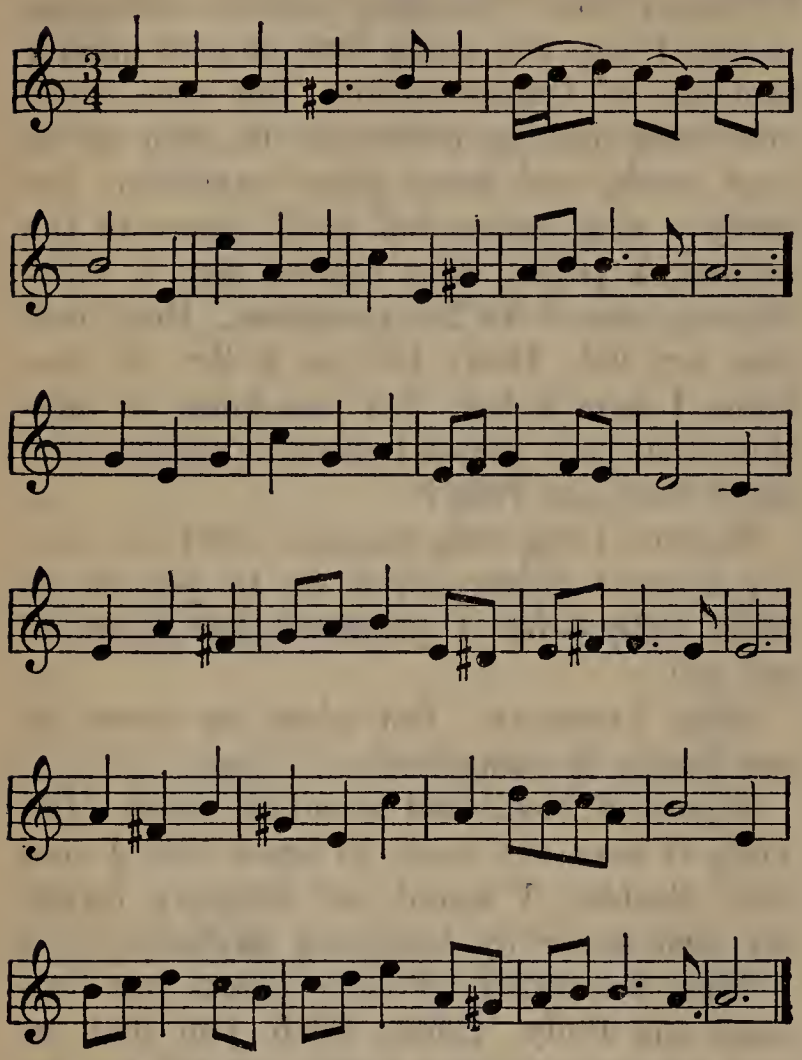
Scene VII

Peachum, Polly

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court or at an assembly. We have it in our natures, papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favor to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

[1] Bailed out of jail.

AIR VI—*What shall I do to show how much I love her, etc.*



Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground;
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around.
But, when once plucked, 'tis no longer alluring;
To Covent-garden 'tis sent (as yet sweet),
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

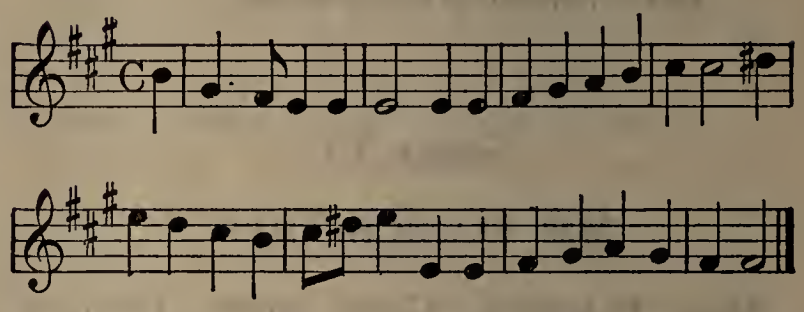
PEACHUM. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and trifling with a customer in the way of business, or to get out a secret or so. But if I find out that you have played the fool and are married, you jade you, I'll cut your throat, hussy! Now you know my mind.

SCENE VIII

PEACHUM, POLLY, MRS. PEACHUM

MRS. PEACHUM *in a very great passion*

AIR VII—*Oh London is a fine town*



Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we taught her.
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!
For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops to swell her pride,
With scarfs and stays, and gloves and lace; and she will have men beside;
And when she's dressed with care and cost, all-tempting fine and gay,
As men should serve a cowcumber, she flings herself away.
Our Polly is a sad slut, etc.

You baggage, you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! Had you been hanged, it would not have vexed me, for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice! The wench is married, husband.

PEACHUM. Married! The captain is a bold man, and will risk anything for money; to be sure, he believes her a fortune!—Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married? Baggage!

MRS. PEACHUM. I knew she was always a proud slut; and now the wench has played the fool and married because, forsooth, she would do like the gentry. Can you support the expense of a husband, hussy, in gaming, drinking and whoring? Have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife about who shall squander most? There are not many husbands and wives who can bear the charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way. If you

must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill used, and as much neglected, as if thou hadst married a lord!

PEACHUM. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency, for the captain looks upon himself in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting, or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife.—Tell me, hussy, are you ruined or no?

MRS. PEACHUM. With Polly's fortune, she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction. Yes, that you might, you pouting slut!

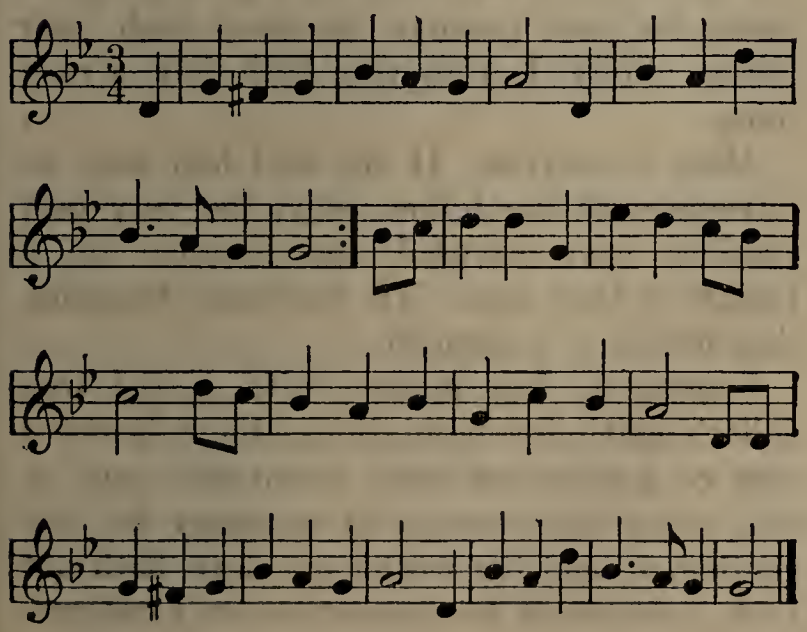
PEACHUM. What, is the wench dumb? Speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking? (*Pinches her*)

POLLY. (*Screaming*) Oh!

MRS. PEACHUM. How the mother is to be pitied who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality are nothing to them; they break through them all. They have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother as in cheating at cards.

PEACHUM. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

AIR VIII—*Grim king of the ghosts, etc.*



POLLY.

Can love be controlled by advice?
Will Cupid our mothers obey?
Though my heart were as frozen as ice,
At his flame 'twould have melted away.

When he kissed me, so closely he pressed,
'Twas so sweet that I must have complied,
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry, for fear you should chide.

MRS. PEACHUM. Then all the hopes of our family are gone for ever and ever!

PEACHUM. And Macheath may hang his father- and mother-in-law, in hope to get into their daughter's fortune!

POLLY. I did not marry him (as 'tis the fashion) coolly and deliberately for honor or money—but I love him.

MRS. PEACHUM. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the girl had been better bred. O husband, husband! her folly makes me mad! my head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself—Oh! (*Faints*)

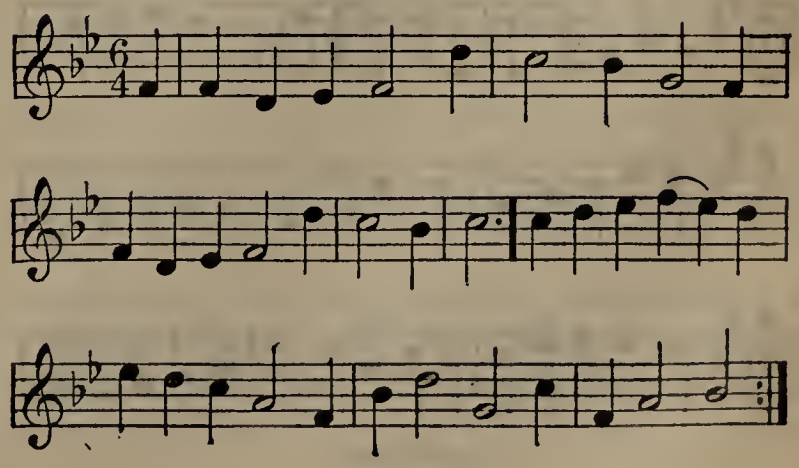
PEACHUM. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! a glass of cordial, this instant. How the poor woman takes it to heart!

(POLLY *goes out and returns with it*) Ah, hussy, now this is the only comfort your mother has left!

POLLY. Give her another glass, sir; my mama drinks double the quantity whenever she is out of order.—This, you see, fetches her.

MRS. PEACHUM. The girl shows such a readiness, and so much concern, that I could almost find in my heart to forgive her.

AIR IX—*O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou been*



O Polly, you might have toyed and kissed;
By keeping men off, you keep them on.

POLLY.
But he so teased me,
And he so pleased me,
What I did, you must have done—

MRS. PEACHUM. Not with a highwayman. . . . You sorry slut!

PEACHUM. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear.

MRS. PEACHUM. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail. But the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice,[1] methinks, for then or never is the time to make her fortune. After that, she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

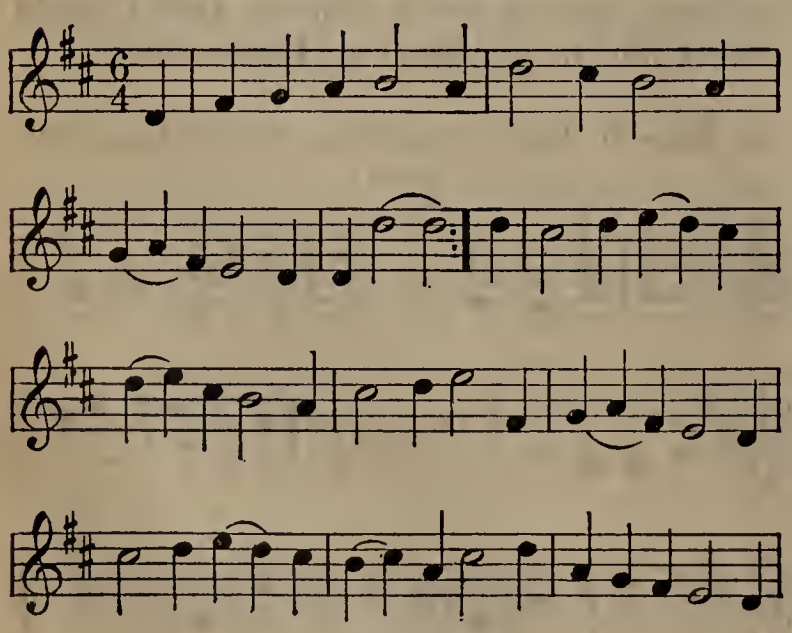
PEACHUM. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? Since what is done cannot be undone, we must all endeavor to make the best of it.

MRS. PEACHUM. Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.—Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

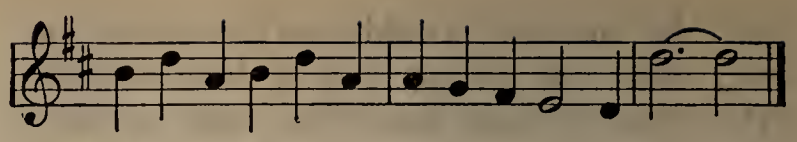
POLLY. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

MRS. PEACHUM. A mighty likely speech in troth, for a wench who is just married.

AIR X—*Thomas, I cannot, etc.*



1 particular.



POLLY.
I, like a ship in storms, was tossed,
Yet afraid to put into land;
For seized in the port, the vessel 's lost,
Whose treasure is contraband.
The waves are laid,
My duty 's paid,
Oh, joy beyond expression!
Thus, safe ashore,
I ask no more,
My all is in my possession [, possession] ;
[*Repeat last line*]

PEACHUM. I hear customers in t'other room. Go, talk with 'em, Polly; but come to us again as soon as they are gone.—But, hark ye, child, if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch, say, you believe we can't get intelligence of it till to-morrow—for I lent it to Suky Straddle, to make a figure with it to-night at a tavern in Drury Lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword, you know beetle-browed Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come from Tunbridge till Tuesday night; so that it cannot be had till then.

[*Exit* POLLY]

SCENE IX

PEACHUM, MRS. PEACHUM

PEACHUM. Dear wife, be a little pacified. Don't let your passion run away with your senses. Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

MRS. PEACHUM. If she had had only an intrigue with the fellow, why, the very best families have excused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

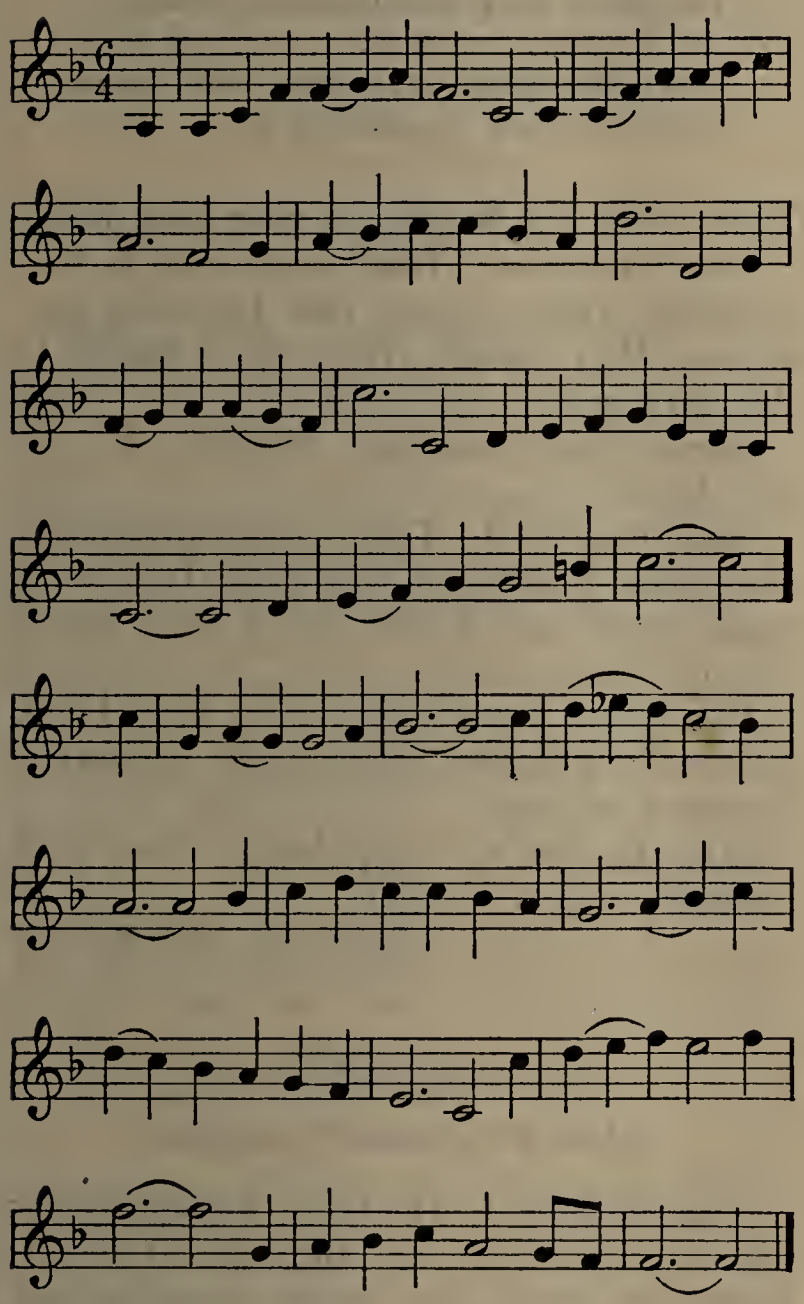
PEACHUM. But money, wife, is the true fuller's earth for reputations; there is not a spot or a stain but what it can take out. A rich rogue nowadays is fit company for any gentleman, and the world, my dear, hath not such a contempt for roguery as you imagine.

I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

MRS. PEACHUM. I am very sensible, husband, that Captain Macheath is worth money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already, and then if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

PEACHUM. That, indeed, is a point which ought to be considered.

AIR XI—*A soldier and a sailor*



A fox may steal your hens, sir,
A whore your health and pence, sir,
Your daughter rob your chest, sir,
Your wife may steal your rest, sir,
A thief your goods and plate.
But this is all but picking;
With rest, pence, chest, and chicken;
It ever was decreed, sir,
If lawyer's hand is fee'd, sir,
He steals your whole estate.
[*Repeat last line*]

The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our way. They don't care that anybody should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

SCENE X

MRS. PEACHUM, PEACHUM, POLLY

POLLY. 'Twas only Nimming Ned. He brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a periwig, and one silk stocking, from the fire that happened last night.

PEACHUM. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way and saves more goods out of fire, than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair; for matters must not be left as they are. You are married then, it seems?

POLLY. Yes, sir.

PEACHUM. And how do you propose to live, child?

POLLY. Like other women, sir—upon the industry of my husband.

MRS. PEACHUM. What, is the wench turned fool? A highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as of his company.

PEACHUM. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly?

POLLY. I don't know what you mean, sir.

PEACHUM. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

POLLY. But I love him, sir; how then could I have thoughts of parting with him?

PEACHUM. Parting with him! Why, that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits. Where is the woman who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

POLLY. How I dread to hear your advice! Yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

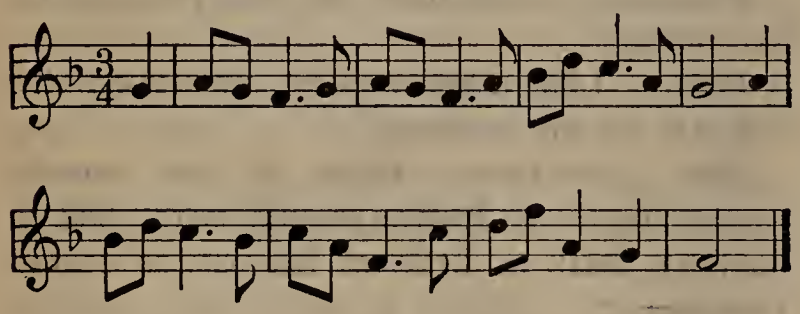
PEACHUM. Secure what he hath got, have him peached the next sessions, and then at once you are made a rich widow.

POLLY. What, murder the man I love! The blood runs cold at my heart at the very thought of it.

PEACHUM. Fie, Polly! What hath murder to do in the affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say the captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the captain knows that as 'tis his employment to rob, so 'tis ours to take robbers; every man in his business. So that there is no malice in the case.

MRS. PEACHUM. Ay, husband, now you have nicked the matter. To have him peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

AIR XII—*Now ponder well, ye parents dear*



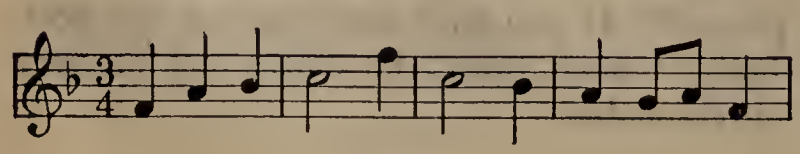
POLLY.

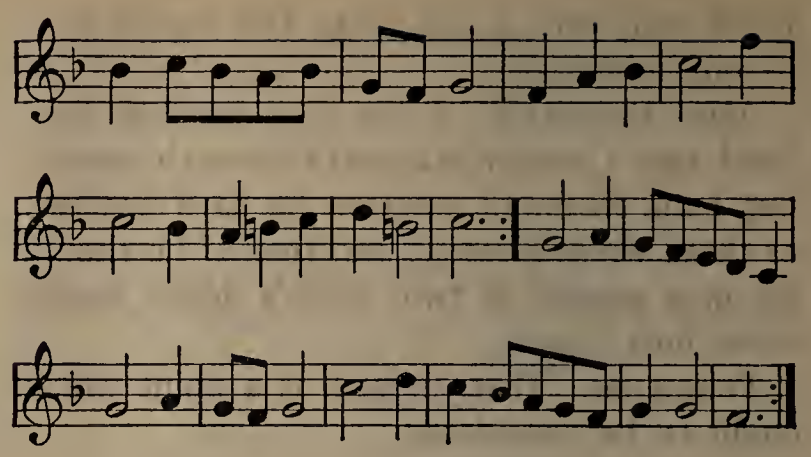
Oh, ponder well! be not severe;
So save a wretched wife!
For on the rope that hangs my dear
Depends poor Polly's life.

MRS. PEACHUM. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a wife give for such an opportunity!

POLLY. What is a jointure, what is a widowhood to me? I know my heart. I cannot survive him.

AIR XIII—*Le printemps rappelle aux armes*





The turtle thus with plaintive crying,
Her lover dying,
The turtle thus with plaintive crying,
Laments her dove.
Down she drops, quite spent with sighing;
Pair'd in death, as pair'd in love.

Thus, sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

MRS. PEACHUM. What, is the fool in love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular. Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex.

POLLY. But hear me, mother,—if you ever loved—

MRS. PEACHUM. Those cursed play-books she reads have been her ruin. One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

PEACHUM. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of mischief, and consider of what is proposed to you.

MRS. PEACHUM. Away, hussy. Hang your husband, and be dutiful.

[POLLY *withdraws, but listens*]

SCENE XI

MRS. PEACHUM, PEACHUM

MRS. PEACHUM. The thing, husband, must and shall be done. For the sake of intelligence, we must take other measures and have him peached the next session without her consent. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

PEACHUM. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagem, how much we have already got

by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my heart to have a hand in his death. I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

MRS. PEACHUM. But in a case of necessity—our own lives are in danger.

PEACHUM. Then, indeed, we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest. He shall be taken off.

MRS. PEACHUM. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

PEACHUM. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE XII

POLLY

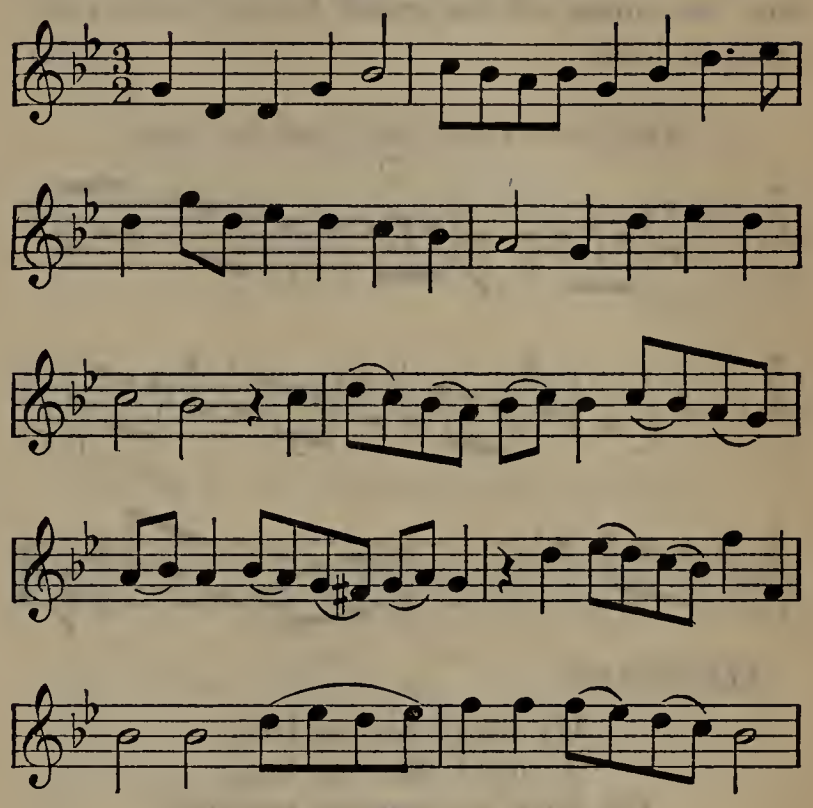
POLLY. Now I'm a wretch, indeed—methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand!—I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity!—What volleys of sighs are sent from the windows of Holborn, that so comely a youth should be brought to disgrace!—I see him at the tree! The whole circle are in tears!—even butchers weep!—Jack Ketch himself hesitates to perform his duty, and would be glad to lose his fee, by a reprieve. What then will become of Polly? As yet I may inform him of their design, and aid him in his escape. It shall be so!—But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear, dear conversation! That too will distract me. If he keep out of the way, my papa and mama may in time relent, and we may be happy. If he stays, he is hanged, and then he is lost forever! He intended to lie concealed in my room till the dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll this instant let him out, lest some accident should prevent him.

Exit, and returns

SCENE XIII

POLLY, MACHEATH

AIR XIV—*Pretty Parrot, say*



MACHEATH.

Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover?

POLLY.

Without disguise,
Heaving sighs,
Doating eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll!

MACHEATH.

O pretty, pretty Poll.[1]

POLLY. And are you as fond as ever, my dear?

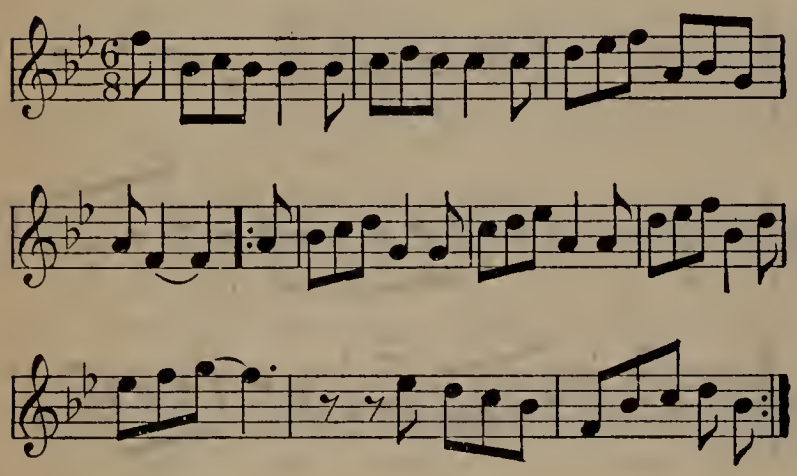
MACHEATH. Suspect my honor, my courage—suspect anything but my love. May my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her

1 Repeat.

shoulder while I am pursued, if I ever forsake thee!

POLLY. Nay, my dear, I have no reason to doubt you, for I find in the romance you lent me, none of the great heroes were ever false in love.

AIR XV—*Pray, fair one, be kind*



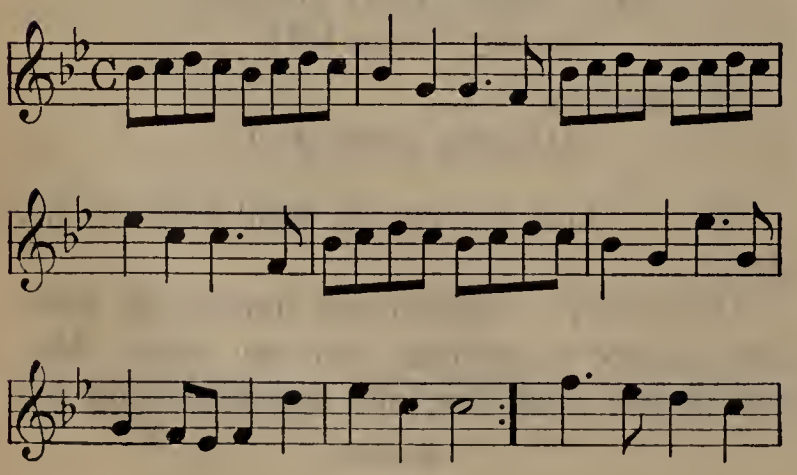
MACHEATH.

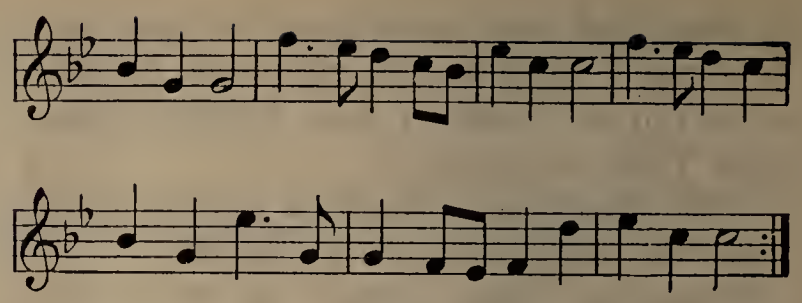
My heart was so free,
It roved like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipt each flower,
I changed ev'ry hour,
But here ev'ry flower is united.

POLLY. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

MACHEATH. Is there any power, any force that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking glass, or any woman from quadrille. But to tear me from thee is impossible!

AIR XVI—*Over the hills and far away*





Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
And in my arms embraced my lass;
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.

POLLY.

Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil,
When on my charmer's breast reposed.

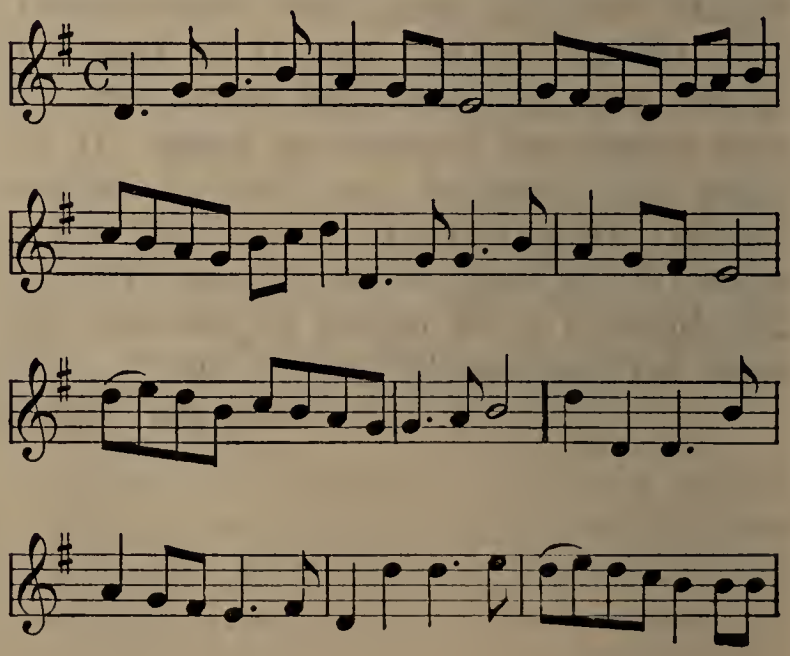
MACHEATH. And I would love you all the day,
POLLY. Every night would kiss and play,
MACHEATH. If with me you'd fondly stray
POLLY. Over the hills and far away.

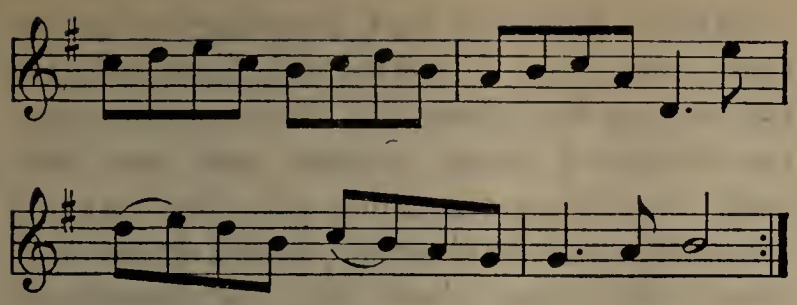
POLLY. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!—how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee. We must part.

MACHEATH. How! Part!

POLLY. We must, we must. My papa and mama are set against thy life. They now, even now are in search after thee. They are preparing evidence against thee. Thy life depends upon a moment.

AIR XVII—*Gin thou wert mine awn thing*





Oh, what pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
Oh, what pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?
But lest death my love should thwart
And bring thee to the fatal cart,
Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart!
Fly hence, and let me leave thee.

One kiss and then—one kiss. Begone—farewell.

MACHEATH. My hand, my heart, my dear, is so riveted to thine, that I cannot unloose my hold.

POLLY. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

MACHEATH. Must I then go?

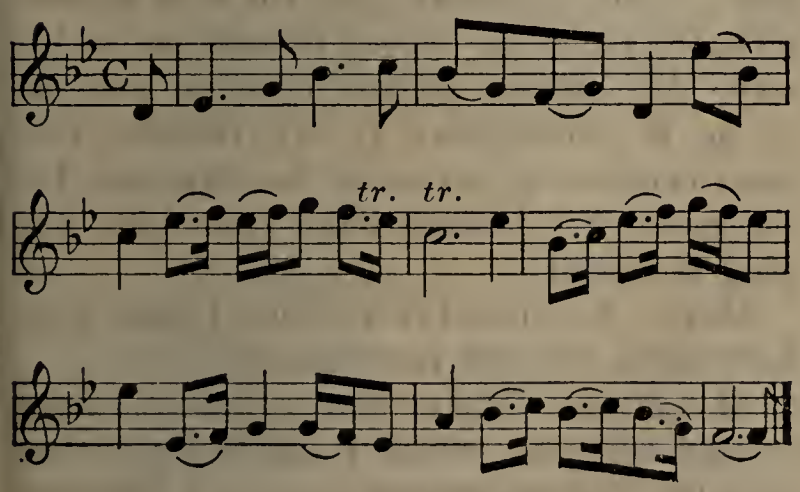
POLLY. And will not absence change your love?

MACHEATH. If you doubt it, let me stay—and be hanged.

POLLY. Oh, how I fear! how I tremble!—Go—but when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for till then Polly is wretched.

(*Parting, and looking back at each other with fondness; he at one door, she at the other*)

AIR XVIII—*Oh the broom, etc.*



MACHEATH.

The miser thus a shilling sees,
Which he's obliged to pay,
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.

POLLY.

The boy, thus, when his sparrow's flown,
The bird in silence eyes;
But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT II

SCENE I. *A tavern near Newgate*

JEREMY TWITCHER, CROOK-FINGERED JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HARRY PADINGTON, MATT OF THE MINT, BEN BUDGE, *and the rest of the gang, at the table, with wine, brandy, and tobacco*

BEN. But prithee, Matt, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

MATT. Poor brother Tom had an accident this time twelve-month, and so clever a made fellow he was, that I could not save him from those flaying rascals the surgeons; and now, poor man, he is among the anatomies at Surgeons' Hall.

BEN. So, it seems, his time was come.

JEREMY. But the present time is ours, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? Are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own by the law of arms and the right of conquest.

JACK. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers, who to a man are above the fear of death?

WAT. Sound men, and true!

ROBIN. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

NED. Who is there here that would not die for his friend?

HARRY. Who is there here that would betray him for his interest?

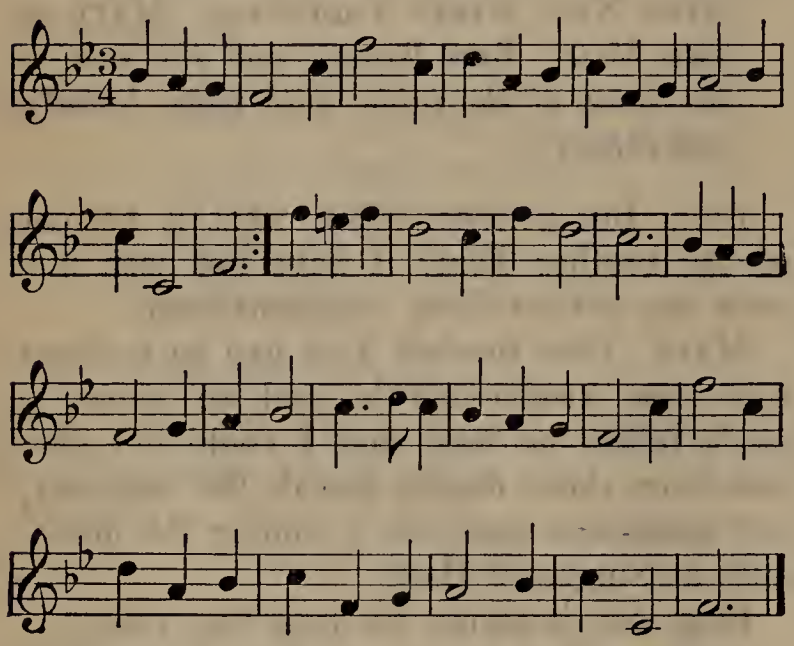
MATT. Show me a gang of courtiers that can say as much.

BEN. We are for a just partition of the world, for every man hath a right to enjoy life.

MATT. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind, for money was made for the free-hearted and generous; and where is the injury of taking from another, what he hath not the heart to make use of?

JEREMY. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us! Fill the glasses.

AIR [I]—*Fill ev'ry glass, etc.*



MATT.

Fill ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us,
With courage, love, and joy.
Women and wine should life employ.
Is there aught else on earth desirous?

CHORUS.

Fill ev'ry glass, etc.

SCENE II

To them enter MACHEATH. [*They rise*]

MACHEATH. Gentlemen, well met. My heart hath been with you this hour, but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you.

MATT. We were just breaking up to go upon duty. Am I to have the honor of taking the air with you, sir, this evening upon the heath? I drink a dram now and then with the stage-coachmen in the way of friendship and intelligence, and I know that about this time there will be passengers upon the Western Road who are worth speaking with.

MACHEATH. I was to have been of that party—but—

MATT. But what, sir?

MACHEATH. Is there any man who suspects my courage?—

MATT. We have all been witnesses of it.—

MACHEATH. My honor and truth to the gang?

MATT. I'll be answerable for it.

MACHEATH. In the division of our booty, have I ever shown the least marks of avarice or injustice?

MATT. By these questions something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

MACHEATH. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all, as men of honor, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

MATT. Is he about to play us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

MACHEATH. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

MATT. He knows nothing of this meeting.

MACHEATH. Business cannot go on without him. He is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference, and till it is accommodated I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his direction, for the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

MATT. As a bawd to a whore, I grant you, he is to us of great convenience.

MACHEATH. Make him believe I have quitted the gang, which I can never do but with life. At our private quarters I will con-

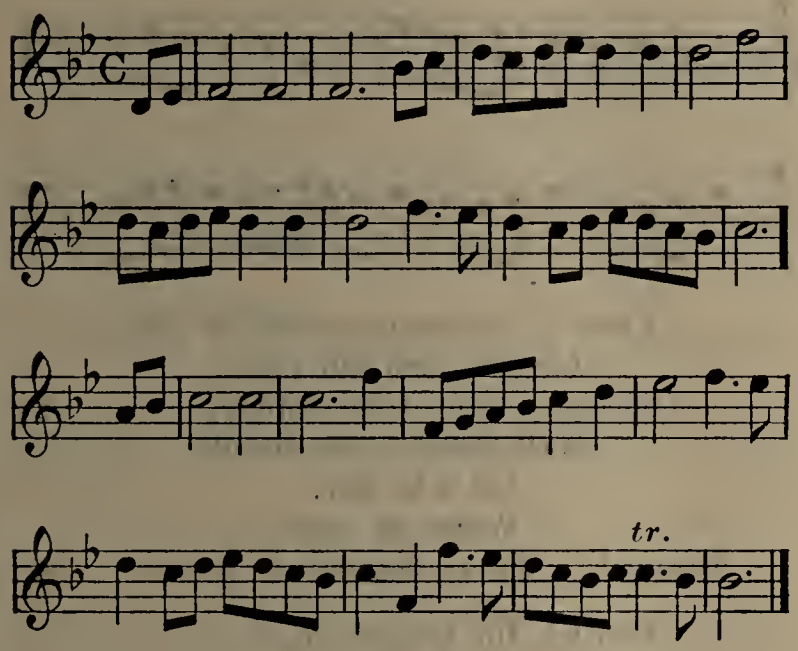
tinue to meet you. A week or so will probably reconcile us.

MATT. Your instructions shall be observed. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so till the evening at our quarters in Moor-fields we bid you farewell.

MACHEATH. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you.

(*Sits down melancholy at the table*)

AIR [II]—*March in Rinaldo, with drums and trumpets*



MATT.

Let us take the road.
Hark! I hear the sound of coaches!
The hour of attack approaches,
To your arms, brave boys, and load.

See the ball I hold!
Let the chymists toil like asses,
Our fire their fire surpasses,
And turns all our lead to gold.

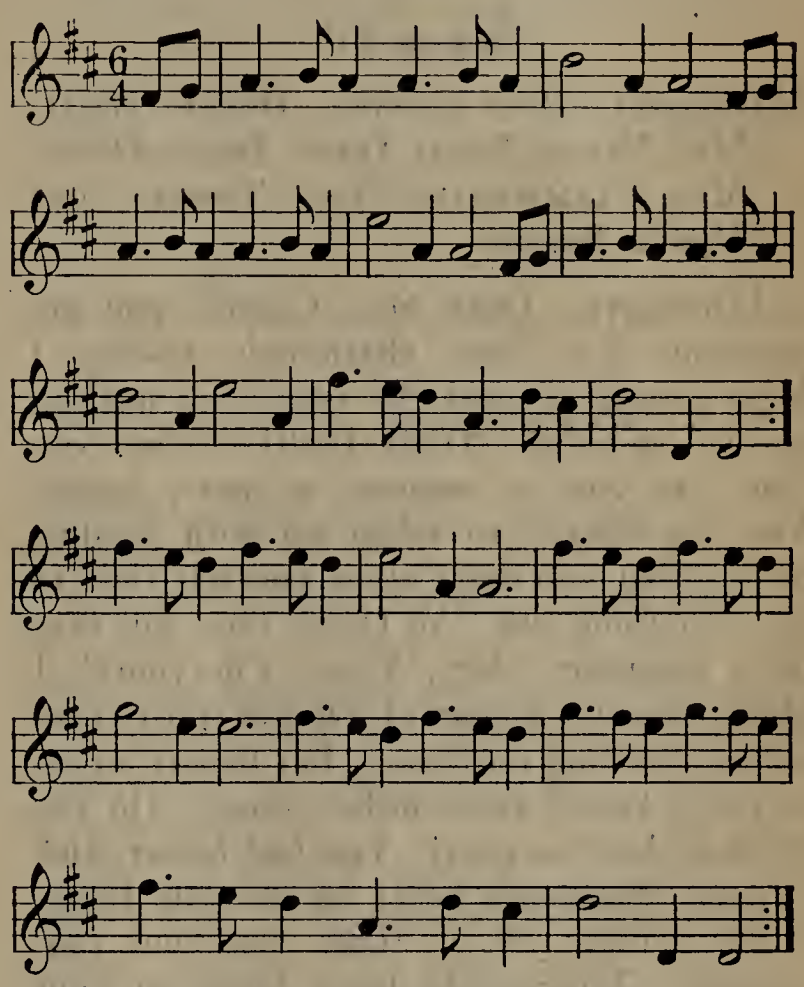
(*The gang, ranged in the front of the stage, load their pistols, and stick them under their girdles, then go off singing the first part in chorus*)

SCENE III

MACHEATH, Drawer

MACHEATH. What a fool is a fond wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit—I love the sex. And a man who loves money might be as well contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town perhaps hath been as much obliged to me, for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us, and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury Lane would be uninhabited.

AIR [III]—*Would you have a young virgin, etc.*



If the heart of a man is depressed with cares,
The mist is dispelled when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those.
Press her,
Caress her
With blisses,
Her kisses
Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

I must have women. There is nothing unbends the mind like them. Money is not so strong a cordial for the time. [*Calls*] Drawer!—

Enter Drawer

Is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

DRAWER. I expect him back every minute. But you know, sir, you sent him as far as Hockley in the Hole for three of the ladies, for one in Vinegar Yard, and for the rest of them somewhere about Lewkner's Lane. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the bar bell. As they come I will show them up. Coming! coming! [*Exit*]

SCENE IV

MACHEATH, MRS. COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, MRS. VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER, MRS. SLAMMEKIN, SUKY TAWDRY, *and* MOLLY BRAZEN

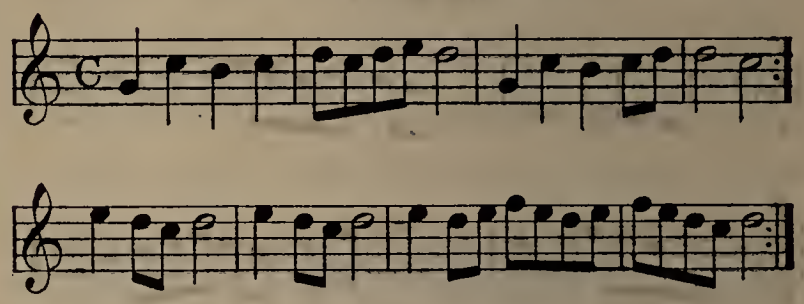
MACHEATH. Dear Mrs. Coaxer, you are welcome. You look charmingly to-day. I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint.—Dolly Trull! kiss me, you slut; are you as amorous as ever, hussy? You are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal anything else. Ah Dolly, thou wilt ever be a coquette.—Mrs. Vixen, I'm yours! I always loved a woman of wit and spirit; they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives.—Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy. Do you drink as hard as ever? You had better stick to good, wholesome beer; for in troth, Betty, strong waters will, in time, ruin your constitution. You should leave those to your betters.—What! and my pretty Jenny Diver too! As prim and demure as ever! There is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart. Ah! thou art a dear artful hypocrite!—Mrs. Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress.—But see, here's Suky Tawdry come to contradict what I was saying. Everything she gets one way, she lays out upon her back. Why, Suky, you must keep at least a dozen tally-men.—Molly Brazen! (*She kisses him*) That's well done. I love a free-hearted wench. Thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle.—But hark! I hear music. The harper is at the door. "If music be the food of love, play on." Ere you seat yourselves, ladies, what think you of a dance? Come in.

Enter Harper

Play the French tune that Mrs. Slammekin was so fond of.

(*A dance à la ronde in the French manner; near the end of it this song and chorus*)

AIR [IV]—*Cotillion*



Youth's the season made for joys,
Love is then our duty;
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty.
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

Youth's the season, etc.

Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow.
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.

CHORUS.

Let us drink, etc.

MACHEATH. Now pray, ladies, take your places. Here, fellow. (*Pays the* Harper) Bid the drawer bring us more wine.

Exit Harper

If any of the ladies choose gin, I hope they will be so free to call for it.

JENNY. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, sir, I never drink strong waters but when I have the colic.

MACHEATH. Just the excuse of the fine ladies! Why, a lady of quality is never with-

out the colic. I hope, Mrs. Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers.

COAXER. We have so many interlopers. Yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking. I carried a silver-flowered lutestring and a piece of black padesoy to Mr. Peachum's lock but last week.

VIXEN. There's Molly Brazen hath the ogle of a rattlesnake. She riveted a linen-draper's eye so fast upon her, that he was nicked of three pieces of cambric before he could look off.

BRAZEN. Oh, dear madam! But sure nothing can come up to your handling of laces! And then you have such a sweet deluding tongue! To cheat a man is nothing; but the woman must have fine parts indeed who cheats a woman!

VIXEN. Lace, madam, lies in a small compass, and is of easy conveyance. But you are apt, madam, to think too well of your friends.

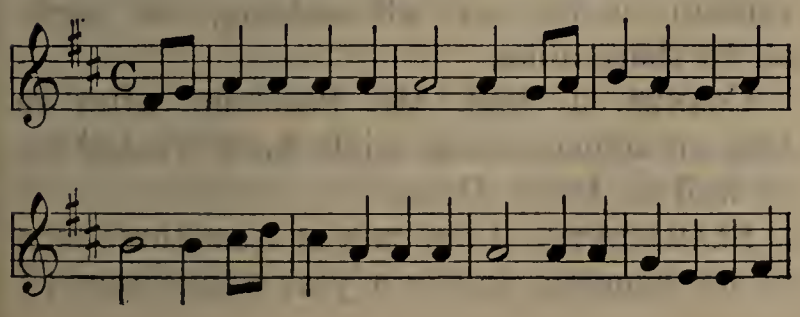
COAXER. If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure, 'tis Jenny Diver. Though her fellow be never so agreeable, she can pick his pocket as coolly as if money were her only pleasure. Now, that is a command of the passions uncommon in a woman!

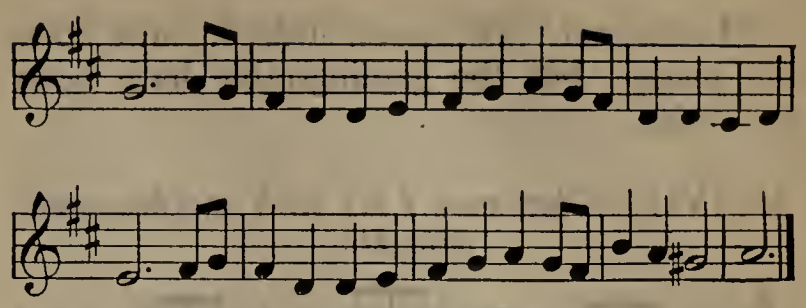
JENNY. I never go to the tavern with a man but in the view of business. I have other hours, and other sort of men for my pleasure. But had I your address, madam—

MACHEATH. Have done with your compliments, ladies, and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you use to be.

JENNY. 'Tis not convenient, sir, to show my kindness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclination, that will determine you.

AIR [V]—*All in a misty morning, etc.*





Before the barn-door crowing,
The cock by hens attended,
His eyes around him throwing,
Stands for a while suspended.

Then one he singles from the crew,
And cheers the happy hen;
With "How do you do," and "How do you do,"
And "How do you do" again.

MACHEATH. Ah Jenny! thou art a dear slut.

TRULL. Pray, madam, were you ever in keeping?

TAWDRY. I hope, madam, I han't been so long upon the town but I have met with some good fortune as well as my neighbors.

TRULL. Pardon me, madam, I meant no harm by the question; 'twas only in the way of conversation.

TAWDRY. Indeed, madam, if I had not been a fool, I might have lived very handsomely with my last friend. But upon his missing five guineas, he turned me off. Now, I never suspected he had counted them.

SLAMMEKIN. Who do you look upon, madam, as your best sort of keepers?

TRULL. That, madam, is thereafter as they be.

SLAMMEKIN. I, madam, was once kept by a Jew; and bating their religion, to women they are a good sort of people.

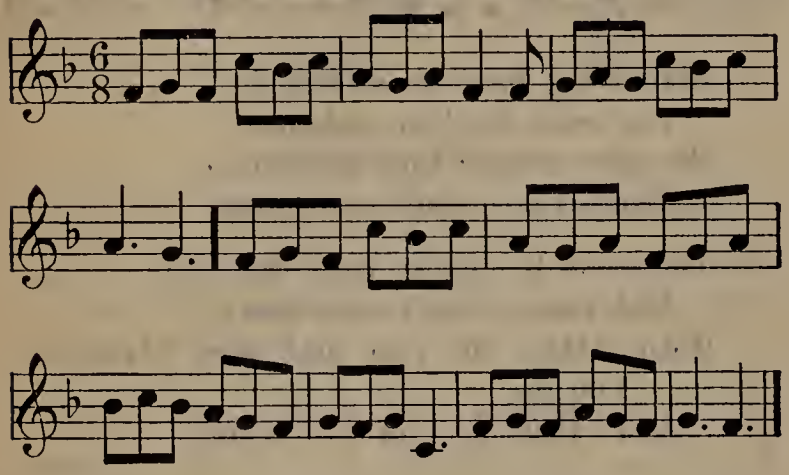
TAWDRY. Now for my part, I own I like an old fellow; for we always make them pay for what they can't do.

VIXEN. A spruce prentice, let me tell you, ladies, is no ill thing; they bleed freely. I have sent at least two or three dozen of them in my time to the plantations.

JENNY. But to be sure, sir, with so much good fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich.

MACHEATH. The road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the gaming-table hath been my ruin.

AIR [VI]—*When once I lay with another man's wife, etc.*



JENNY.

The gamesters and lawyers are jugglers alike,
If they meddle, your all is in danger:
Like gypsies, if once they can finger a souse,
Your pockets they pick, and they pilfer your house,
And give your estate to a stranger.

(*She takes up his pistol.* TAWDRY *takes up the other*)

These are the tools of men of honor. Cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends.

TAWDRY. This, sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. Gaming takes you off from women. How fond could I be of you!—but before company, 'tis ill-bred.

MACHEATH. Wanton hussies!

JENNY. I must and will have a kiss, to give my wine a zest.

(*They take him about the neck, and make signs to* PEACHUM *and* Constables, *who rush in upon him*)

SCENE V

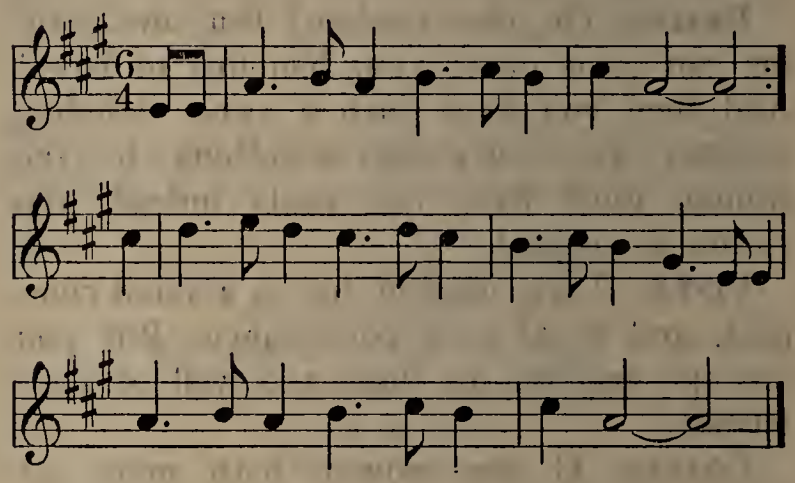
To them PEACHUM *and* Constables

PEACHUM. I seize you, sir, as my prisoner.

MACHEATH. Was this well done, Jenny? Women are decoy ducks: who can trust them? Beasts, jades, jilts, harpies, furies, whores!

PEACHUM. Your case, Mr. Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women. But, to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, sir, take your leave of the ladies, and if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the captain to his lodgings.

AIR [VII]—*When first I laid siege to my Chloris, etc.*



MACHEATH.

At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure;
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of ill,
I shall find no such furies as these are.

PEACHUM. Ladies, I'll take care the reckoning shall be discharged.

Exit MACHEATH, *guarded, with* PEACHUM *and* Constables

SCENE VI

The Women *remain*

VIXEN. Look ye, Mrs. Jenny; though Mr. Peachum may have made a private bargain with you and Suky Tawdry for betraying the captain, as we were all assisting, we ought all to share alike.

COAXER. I think Mr. Peachum, after so long an acquaintance, might have trusted me as well as Jenny Diver.

SLAMMEKIN. I am sure at least three men of his hanging, and in a year's time too, (if

he did me justice) should be set down to my account.

TRULL. Mrs. Slammekin, that is not fair. For you know one of them was taken in bed with me.

JENNY. As far as a bowl of punch or a treat, I believe Mrs. Suky will join with me. As for anything else, ladies, you cannot in conscience expect it.

SLAMMEKIN. Dear madam—

TRULL. I would not for the world—

SLAMMEKIN. 'Tis impossible for me—

TRULL. As I hope to be saved, madam—

SLAMMEKIN. Nay, then I must stay here all night.—

TRULL. Since you command me.

Exeunt with great ceremony

SCENE VII. *Newgate*

LOCKIT, Turnkeys, MACHEATH, Constables

LOCKIT. Noble captain, you are welcome. You have not been a lodger of mine this year and half. You know the custom, sir—garnish, captain, garnish! Hand me down those fetters there.

MACHEATH. Those, Mr. Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole set! With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

LOCKIT. Look ye, captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him.—Hand them down, I say.—We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten, and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

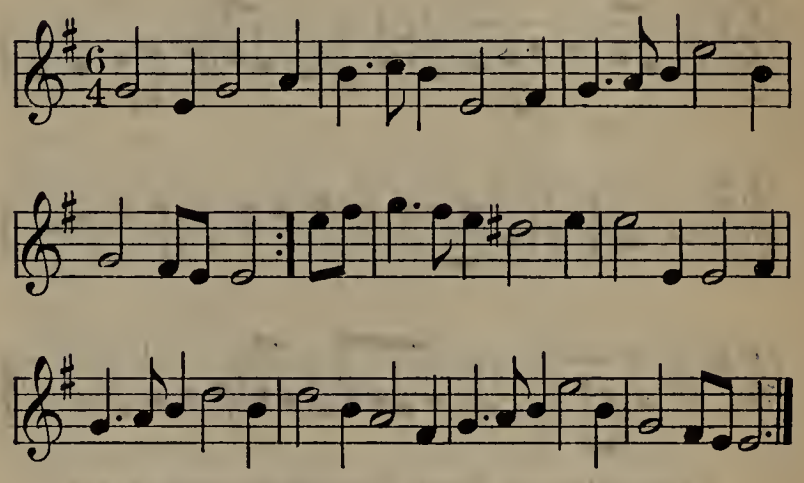
MACHEATH. I understand you, sir. (*Gives money*) The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expense of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

LOCKIT. Those, I see, will fit the captain better. Take down the further pair. Do but examine them, sir,—never was better work. How genteelly they are made! They will fit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them. (*He puts on the chains*) If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, sir—I now leave you to your private meditations.

SCENE VIII

MACHEATH

AIR [VIII]—*Courtiers, courtiers, think it no harm, etc.*



MACHEATH. [*Sings*]

Man may escape from rope and gun;
Nay, some have outlived the doctor's pill;
Who takes a woman must be undone,
That basilisk is sure to kill.

The fly that sips treacle is lost in the sweets,
So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,
He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

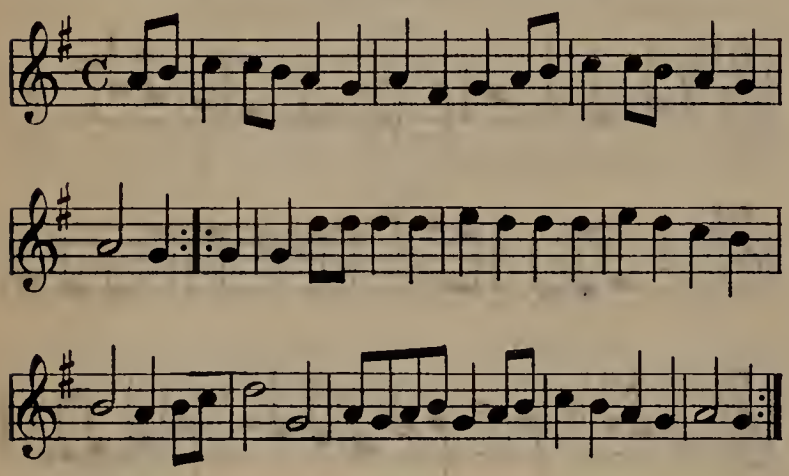
To what a woeful plight have I brought myself! Here must I (all day long, till I am hanged) be confined to hear the reproaches of a wench who lays her ruin at my door. I am in the custody of her father, and to be sure if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution. But I promised the wench marriage. What signifies a promise to a woman? Does not man in marriage itself promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us; for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations.—But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her. Would I were deaf!

Scene IX

Macheath, Lucy

Lucy. You base man, you, how can you look me in the face after what hath passed between us?—See here, perfidious wretch, how I am forced to bear about the load of infamy you have laid upon me—O Macheath! thou hast robbed me of my quiet—to see thee tortured would give me pleasure.

Air [IX]—*A lovely lass to a friar came, etc.*



Thus when a good housewife sees a rat
In a trap in the morning taken,
With pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat
In revenge for her loss of bacon.
Then she throws him
To the dog or cat,
To be worried, crushed, and shaken.

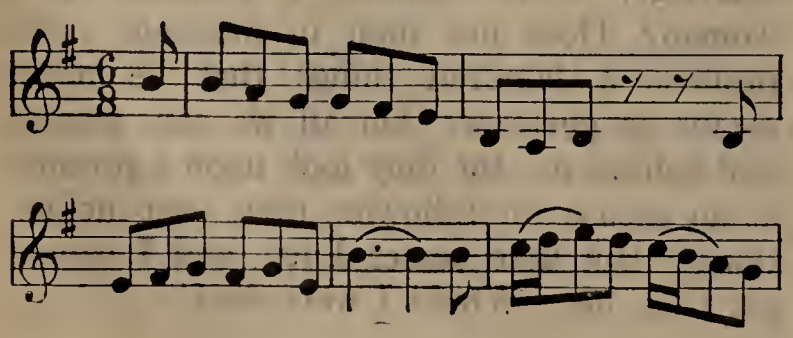
Macheath. Have you no bowels, no tenderness, my dear Lucy, to see a husband in these circumstances?

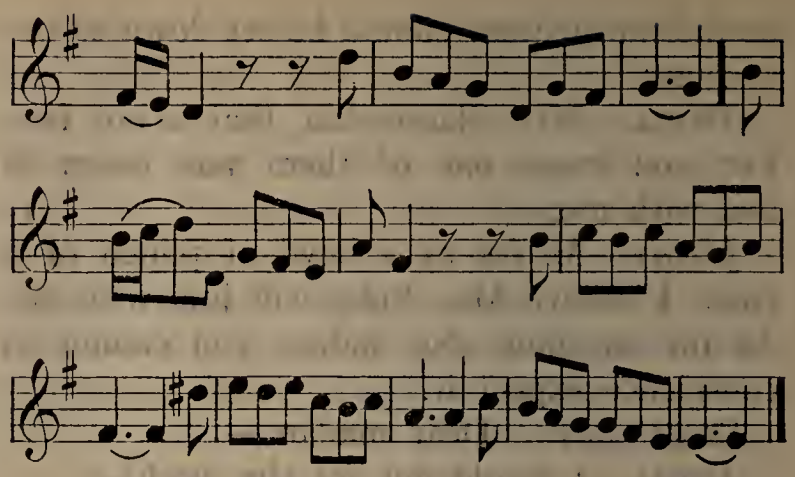
Lucy. A husband!

Macheath. In every respect but the form, and that, my dear, may be said over us at any time. Friends should not insist upon ceremonies. From a man of honor, his word is as good as his bond.

Lucy. 'Tis the pleasure of all you fine men to insult the women you have ruined.

Air [X]—*'Twas when the sea was roaring, etc.*





How cruel are the traitors
Who lie and swear in jest,
To cheat unguarded creatures
Of virtue, fame, and rest!

Whoever steals a shilling
Through shame the guilt conceals;
In love, the perjured villain
With boasts the theft reveals.

Macheath. The very first opportunity, my dear, (have but patience) you shall be my wife in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you think I know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachum. I could tear thy eyes out!

Macheath. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly!

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute, you?

Macheath. Married! Very good. The wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good opinion. 'Tis true I go to the house; I chat with the girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (as all gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert myself; and now the silly jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear Lucy, these violent passions may be of ill consequence to a woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, captain, for all your assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your power to do me the justice you promised me.

Macheath. A jealous woman believes everything her passion suggests. To convince you of my sincerity, if we can find the ordi-

nary, I shall have no scruples of making you my wife—and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

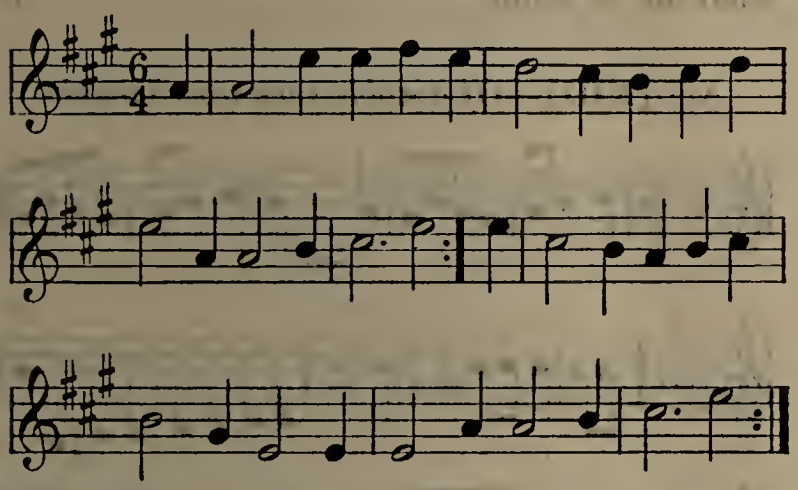
LUCY. That you are only to be hanged, and so get rid of them both.

MACHEATH. I am ready, my dear Lucy, to give you satisfaction—if you think there is any in marriage. What can a man of honor say more?

LUCY. So then it seems—you are not married to Miss Polly.

MACHEATH. You know, Lucy, the girl is prodigiously conceited. No man can say a civil thing to her, but (like other fine ladies) her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

AIR [XI]—*The sun had loosed his weary teams, etc.*



The first time at the looking-glass
The mother sets her daughter,
The image strikes the smiling lass
With self-love ever after.
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks ev'ry charm grows stronger.
But alas, vain maid, all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

LUCY. Yonder is my father. Perhaps this way we may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word; for I long to be made an honest woman.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE X. [LOCKIT'S *office in Newgate*]

PEACHUM, LOCKIT *with an account-book*

LOCKIT. In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath.

PEACHUM. We shall never fall out about an execution. But as to that article, pray how stands our last year's account?

LOCKIT. If you will run your eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly stated.

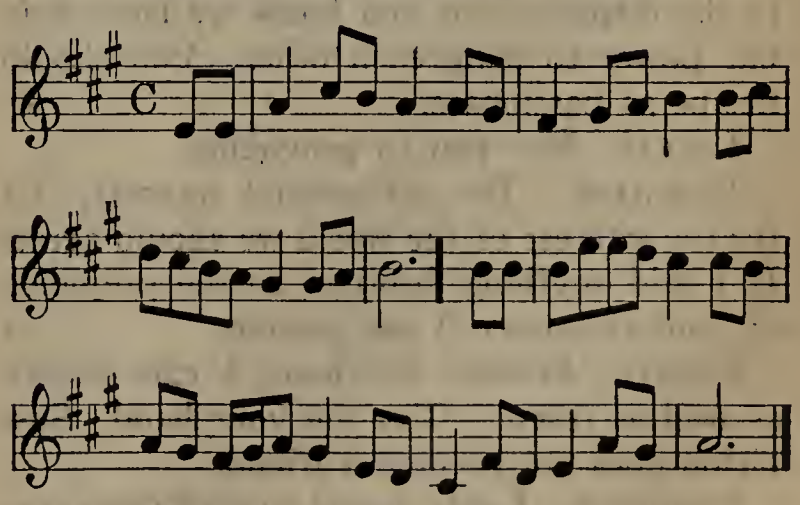
PEACHUM. This long arrear of the government is very hard upon us! Can it be expected that we should hang our acquaintance for nothing, when our betters will hardly save theirs without being paid for it? Unless the people in employment pay better, I promise them for the future, I shall let other rogues live besides their own.

LOCKIT. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid these matters may be carried too far. We are treated, too, by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

PEACHUM. In one respect, indeed, our employment may be reckoned dishonest, because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

LOCKIT. Such language, brother, anywhere else might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR [XII]—*How happy are we, etc.*



When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be.
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe
Each cries—That was levell'd at me.

PEACHUM. Here's poor Ned Clincher's name, I see. Sure, Brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proceeding in Ned's case; for he told me in the condemned hold, that for value received, you had promised him a session or two longer without molestation.

LOCKIT. Mr. Peachum, this is the first time my honor was ever called in question.

PEACHUM. Business is at an end, if once we act dishonorably. 43

LOCKIT. Who accuses me?

PEACHUM. You are warm, brother.

LOCKIT. He that attacks my honor, attacks my livelihood. And this usage, sir, is not to be borne. 48

PEACHUM. Since you provoke me to speak, I must tell you too, that Mrs. Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information-money, for the apprehending of curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information. 55

LOCKIT. Is this language to me, sirrah, who have saved you from the gallows, sirrah? (*Collaring each other*)

PEACHUM. If I am hanged, it shall be for ridding the world of an arrant rascal.

LOCKIT. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you, you dog! [*They break apart*] 62

PEACHUM. —Brother, brother, we are both in the wrong. We shall be both losers in the dispute—for you know we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate. 67

LOCKIT. Nor you so provoking.

PEACHUM. 'Tis our mutual interest; 'tis for the interest of the world we should agree. If I said anything, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon. 72

LOCKIT. Brother Peachum, I can forgive as well as resent. Give me your hand. Suspicion does not become a friend. 75

PEACHUM. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the gentleman about this snuff-box that Filch nimmed two nights ago in the park. I appointed him at this hour. [*Exit* PEACHUM]

SCENE XI

LOCKIT, LUCY

LOCKIT. Whence come you, hussy?

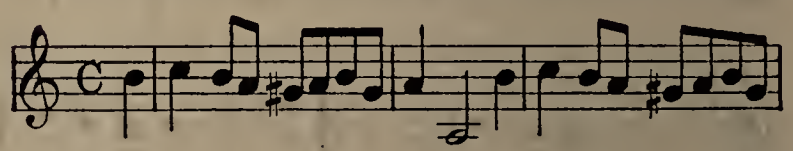
LUCY. My tears might answer that question.

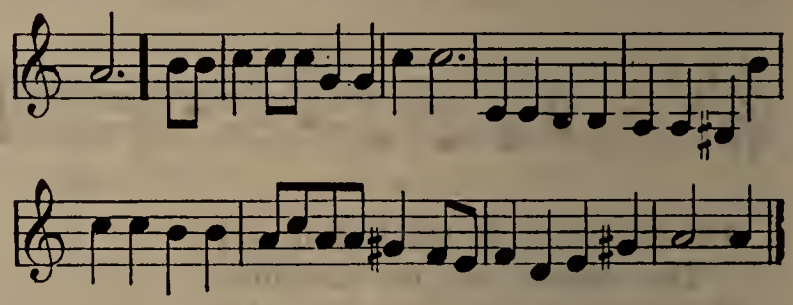
LOCKIT. You have then been whimpering and fondling, like a spaniel, over the fellow that hath abused you. 6

LUCY. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you, and hate him.

LOCKIT. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman. 'Tis not the fashion, nowadays, so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. No woman would ever marry if she had not the chance of mortality for a release. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing. 17

AIR [XIII]—*Of a noble race was Shenkin*



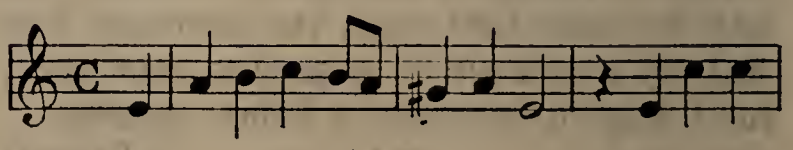


LUCY. [*Sings*]

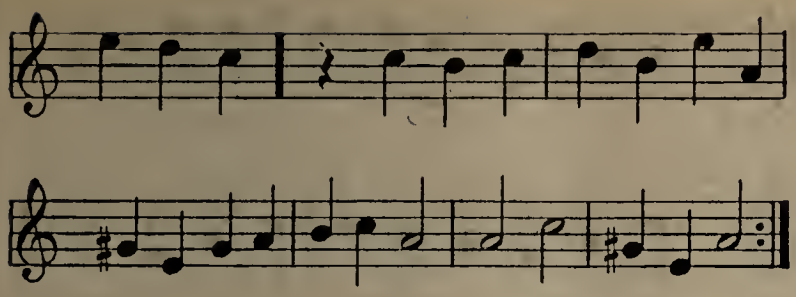
Is then his fate decreed, sir?[1]
Such a man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet, 20
Oh, see how my heart is splitting!

LOCKIT. Look ye, Lucy—there is no saving him—so, I think, you must ev'n do like other widows—buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful. 25

AIR [XIV]



1 Repeat.



You'll think, ere many days ensue,
This sentence not severe;
I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your care.
Twang dang dillo dee.

Like a good wife, go moan over your dying husband; that, child, is your duty.—Consider, girl, you can't have the man and the money too—so make yourself as easy as you can by getting all you can from him.

[*Exeunt*]

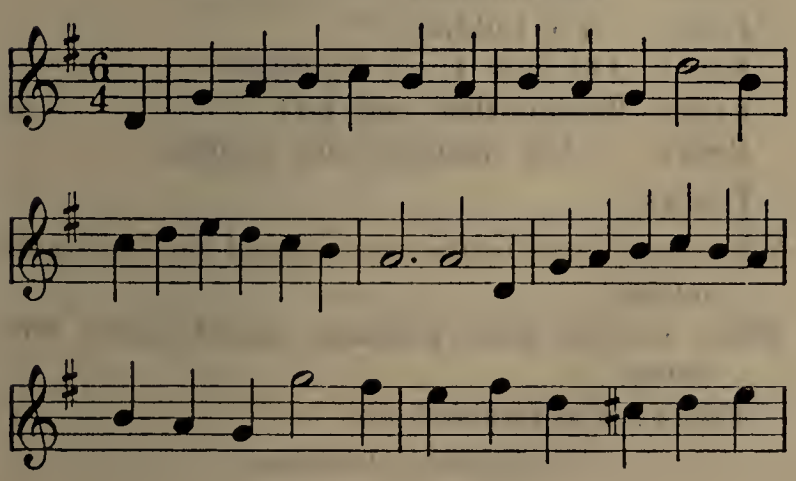
Scene XII. [*Newgate*]

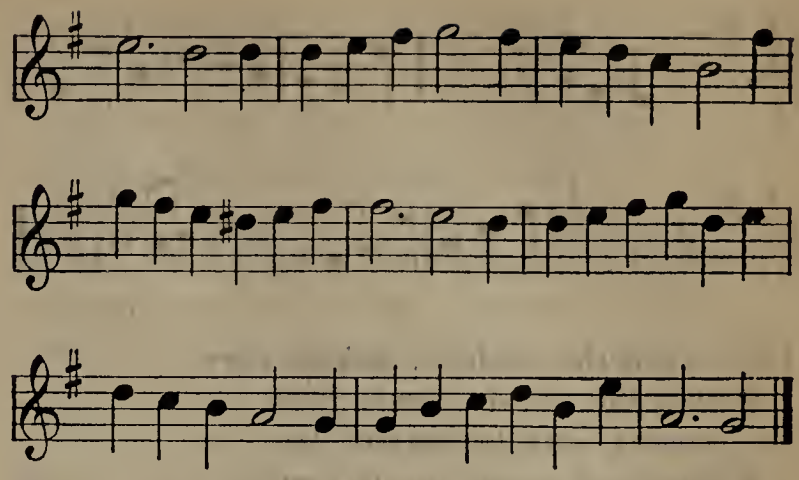
Lucy, Macheath

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples.—Oh, sir!—my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair.

Macheath. But if I could raise a small sum—would not twenty guineas, think you, move him?—Of all the arguments in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing.—Your father's perquisites for the escape of prisoners must amount to a considerable sum in the year. Money well timed and properly applied, will do anything.

Air [XV]—*London ladies*





If you at an office solicit your due,
And would not have matters neglected;
You must quicken the clerk with the perquisite too,
To do what his duty directed.
Or would you the frowns of a lady prevent,
She too has this palpable failing,
The perquisite softens her into consent;
That reason with all is prevailing.

Lucy. What love or money can do shall be done, for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Scene XIII

Lucy, Macheath, Polly [*embracing* Macheath]

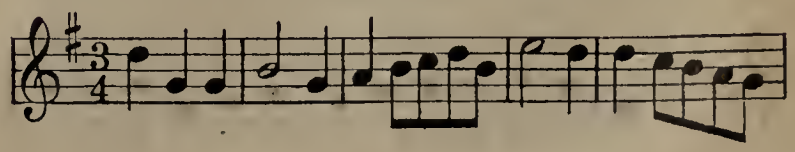
Polly. Where is my dear husband?—Was a rope ever intended for this neck?—Oh, let me throw my arms about it, and throttle thee with love!—Why dost thou turn away from me?—'Tis thy Polly—'tis thy wife.

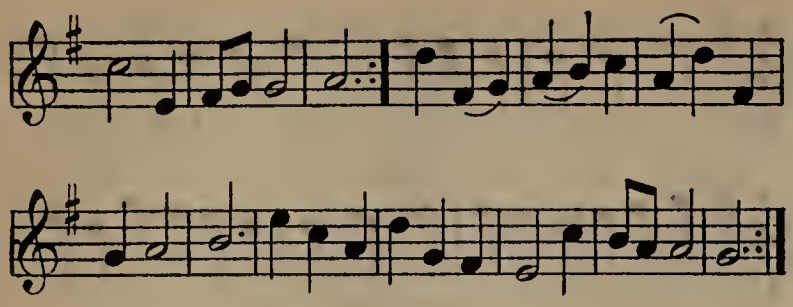
Macheath. Was there ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am!

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain!

Polly. O Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged!—cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death—no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now.—What means my love?—not one kind word!—not one kind look! Think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this condition.

Air [XVI]—*All in the downs, etc.*





Thus when the swallow, seeking prey,
Within the sash is closely pent,
His consort, with bemoaning lay,
Without sits pining for th'event.
Her chattering lovers all around her skim;
She heeds them not (poor bird!)—her soul's with him.

MACHEATH. (*Aside*) I must disown her. [*To* LUCY] The wench is distracted.

LUCY. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure, men were born to lie, and women to believe them. O villain! villain!

POLLY. Am I not thy wife? Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it.—Look on me. Tell me; am I not thy wife?

LUCY. Perfidious wretch!

POLLY. Barbarous husband!

LUCY. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy.

POLLY. And I too. If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me—and that's no very unreasonable request (though from a wife) to a man who hath not above seven or eight days to live.

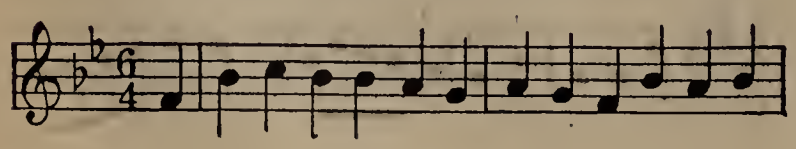
LUCY. Art thou then married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

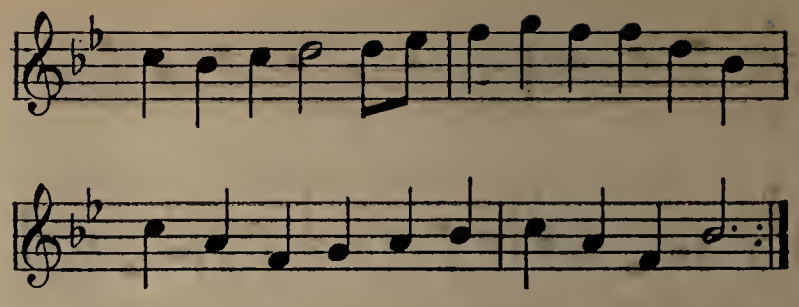
MACHEATH. If women's tongues can cease for an answer—hear me.

LUCY. I won't! Flesh and blood can't bear my usage.

POLLY. Shall I not claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

AIR [XVII]—*Have you heard of a frolicsome ditty, etc.*





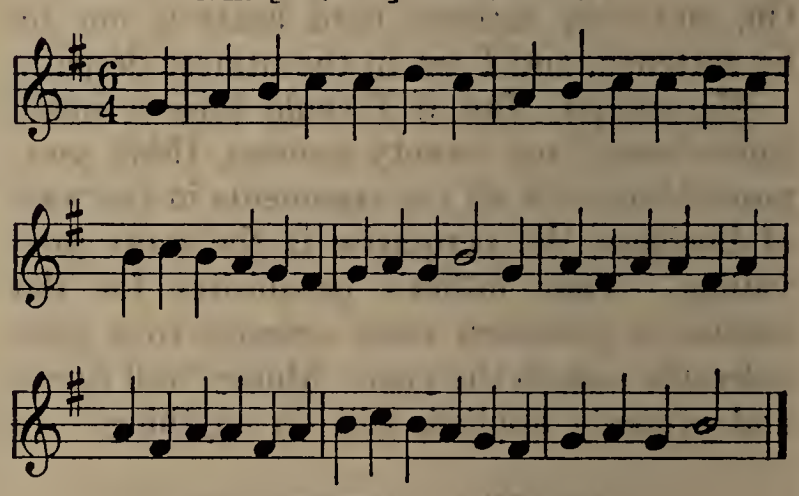
MACHEATH.

How happy I could be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away!
But while you thus teaze me together,
To neither a word will I say:
But tol de rol, etc.

POLLY. Sure, my dear, there ought to be some preference shown to a wife! At least she may claim the appearance of it.—He must be distracted with his misfortunes, or he could not use me thus!

LUCY. O villain, villain! thou hast deceived me—I could even inform against thee with pleasure. Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

AIR [XVIII]—*Irish Trot*



POLLY. I'm bubbled.[1]
LUCY. —I'm bubbled.
POLLY. Oh how I am troubled!
LUCY. Bamboozled, and bit!
POLLY. —My distresses are doubled.

LUCY.

When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,
These fingers, with pleasure, could fasten the noose.

POLLY. I'm bubbled, etc.

[1] cheated, a bankrupt.

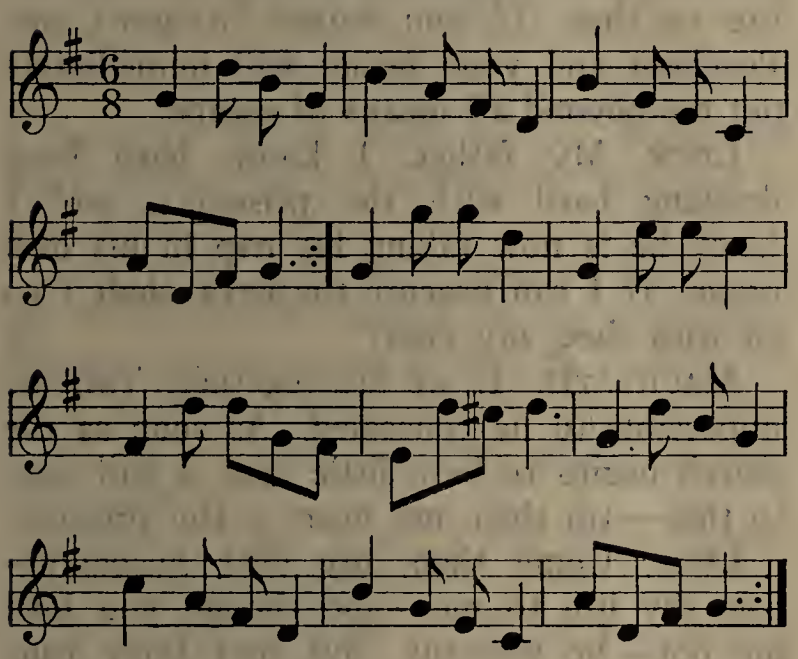
MACHEATH. Be pacified, my dear Lucy! —This is all a fetch of Polly's to make me desperate with you in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain have the credit of being thought my widow.—Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

POLLY. And hast thou the heart to persist in disowning me?

MACHEATH. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

LUCY. Really, Miss Peachum, you but expose yourself. Besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances.

AIR [XIX]



POLLY.

Cease your funning,
Force or cunning
Never shall my heart trepan.
All these sallies
Are but malice
To seduce my constant man.
'Tis most certain,
By their flirting,
Women oft have envy shown;
Pleased to ruin
Others' wooing;
Never happy in their own!

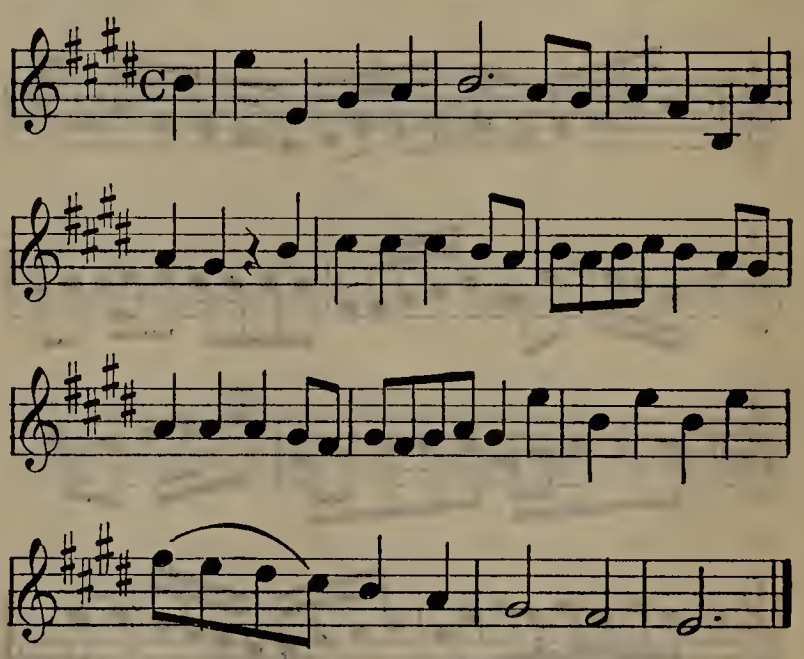
LUCY. Decency, madam, methinks, might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve with the husband while his wife is present.

MACHEATH. But, seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

LUCY. If you are determined, madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey to show you the door. I am sorry, madam, you force me to be so ill-bred.

POLLY. Give me leave to tell you, madam; these forward airs don't become you in the least, madam. And my duty, madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, madam.

AIR [XX]—*Good-morrow, gossip Joan*



LUCY.

Why, how now, Madam Flirt?
If you thus must chatter;
And are for flinging dirt,
Let's try who best can spatter!
Madam Flirt!

POLLY.

Why, how now, saucy jade;
Sure the wench is tipsy! (*To him*)
How can you see me made
The scoff of such a gipsy? (*To her*)
Saucy jade!

SCENE XIV

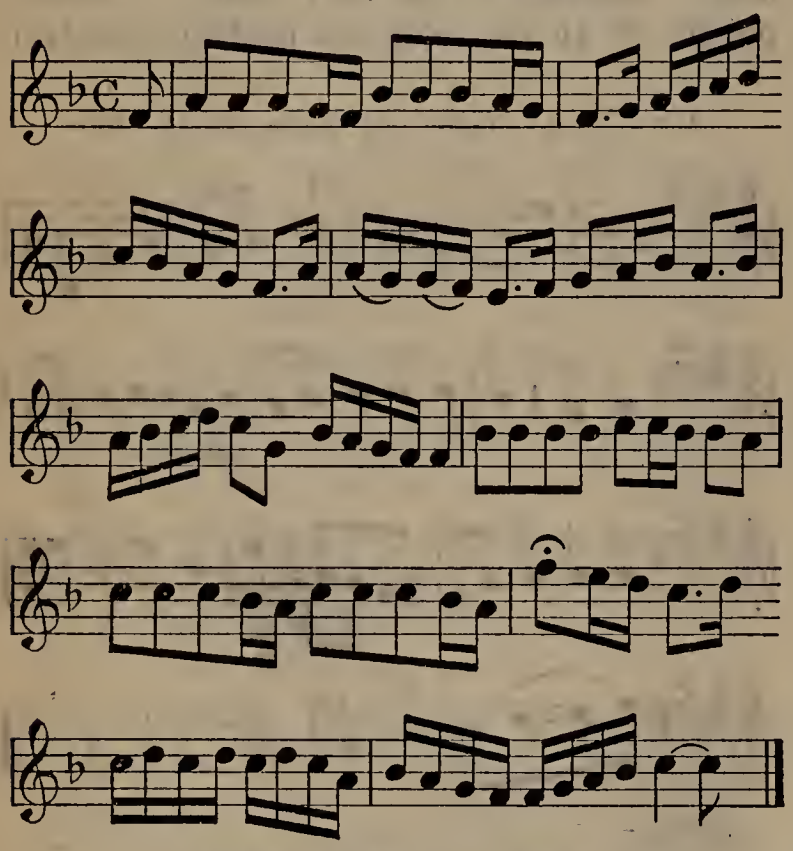
LUCY, MACHEATH, POLLY, PEACHUM

PEACHUM. Where's my wench? Ah hussy! hussy!—Come you home, you slut; and when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

POLLY. Dear, dear father, do not tear me from him! I must speak; I have more to say to him. [*To* MACHEATH] Oh! twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

PEACHUM. Sure, all women are alike! If ever they commit the folly, they are sure to commit another by exposing themselves.—Away—not a word more—you are my prisoner now, hussy!

AIR [XXI]—*Irish howl*



POLLY. (*Holding* MACHEATH, PEACHUM *pulling her*)

No power on earth can e'er divide
The knot that sacred love hath tied.
When parents draw against our mind,
The true-love's knot they faster bind.
Oh, oh ray, oh amborah—Oh, oh, etc.

[*Exeunt* POLLY *and* PEACHUM]

SCENE XV

LUCY, MACHEATH

MACHEATH. I am naturally compassionate, wife, so that I could not use the wench as she deserved, which made you at first suspect there was something in what she said.

LUCY. Indeed, my dear, I was strangely puzzled.

MACHEATH. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance. No, Lucy,—I had rather die than be false to thee.

LUCY. How happy am I if you say this from your heart! For I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged than in the arms of another.

MACHEATH. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?

LUCY. O Macheath, I can never live to see that day.

MACHEATH. You see, Lucy; in the account of love you are in my debt, and you must now be convinced that I rather choose to die than to be another's. Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my life to thee. If you refuse to assist me, Peachum and your father will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

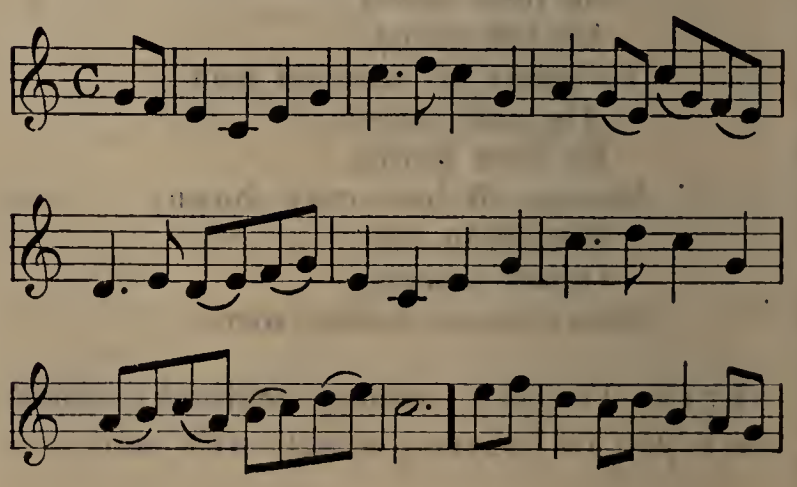
LUCY. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners, and I fancy he is now taking his nap in his own room. If I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

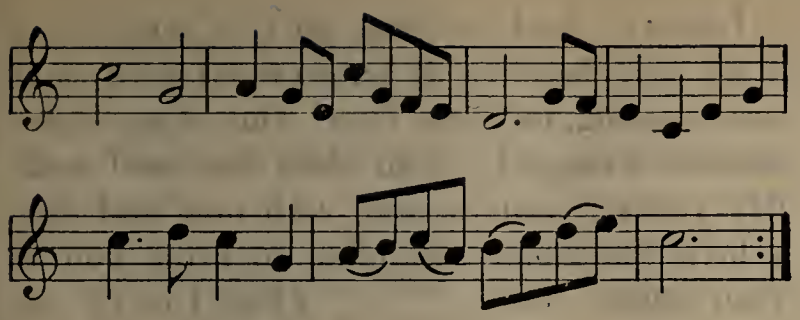
MACHEATH. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee—till then, my heart is thy prisoner.

LUCY. Come then, my dear husband—owe thy life to me—and though you love me not—be grateful. But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

MACHEATH. A moment of time may make us unhappy forever.

AIR [XXII]—*The lass of Patie's mill, etc.*





LUCY.

I like the fox shall grieve,
Whose mate hath left her side,
Whom hounds, from morn till eve,
Chase o'er the country wide.
Where can my lover hide?
Where cheat the weary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back!

[*Exeunt*]

ACT III

SCENE I. *Newgate*

LOCKIT, LUCY

LOCKIT. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to this escape.

LUCY. Sir, here hath been Peachum and his daughter Polly, and to be sure they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

LOCKIT. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling answers.

LUCY. Well then—if I know anything of him, I wish I may be burnt!

LOCKIT. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

LUCY. Keep yours, sir. I do wish I may be burnt, I do. And what can I say more to convince you?

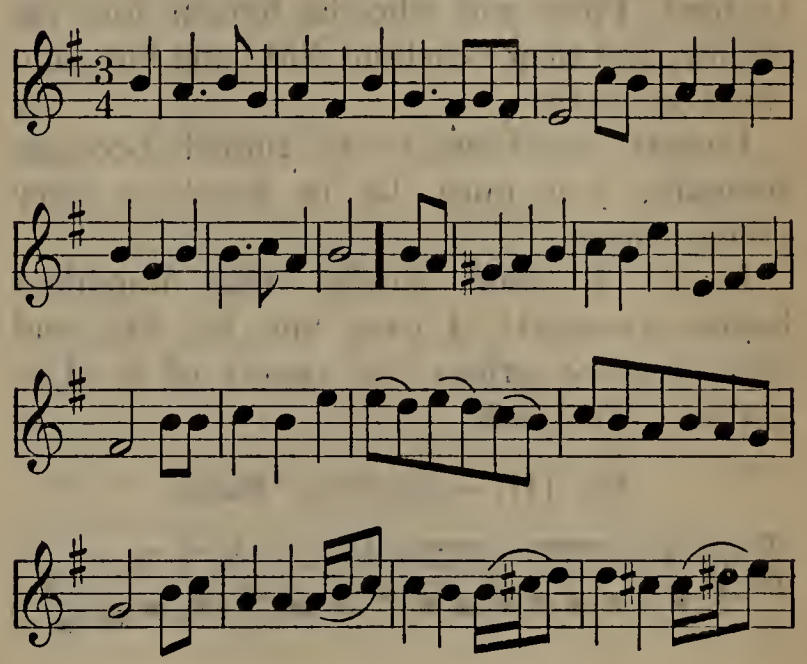
LOCKIT. Did he tip handsomely? How much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father, and I shall not be angry with you. Perhaps you have made a better bargain with him than I could have done. How much, my good girl?

LUCY. You know, sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

LOCKIT. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard; for a girl in the bar of an ale-house is always besieged.

LUCY. Dear sir, mention not my education—for 'twas to that I owe my ruin.

AIR [I]—*If love's a sweet passion, etc.*



When young, at the bar you first taught me to score,
And bid me be free of my lips, and no more.
I was kissed by the parson, the squire, and the sot;
When the guest was departed, the kiss was forgot.
But his kiss was so sweet, and so closely he prest,
That I languished and pined till I granted the rest.

If you can forgive me, sir, I will make a fair confession, for to be sure he hath been a most barbarous villain to me.

LOCKIT. And so you have let him escape, hussy, have you?

LUCY. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word can persuade her to anything, and I could ask no other bribe.

LOCKIT. Thou wilt always be a vulgar slut, Lucy. If you would not be looked upon as a fool, you should never do anything but

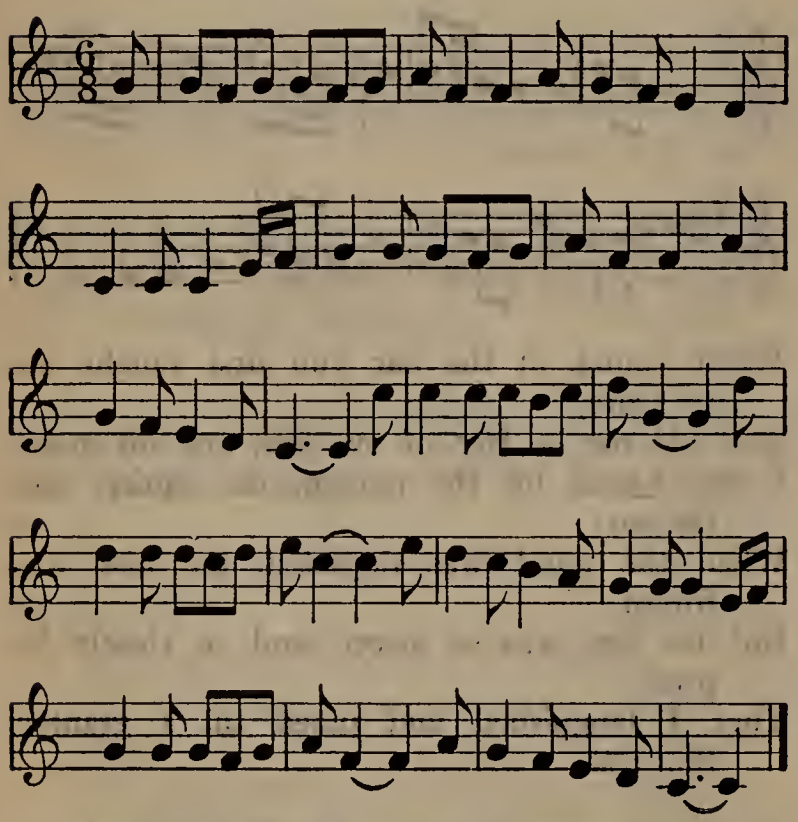
upon the foot of interest. Those that act otherwise are their own bubbles.

LUCY. But love, sir, is a misfortune that may happen to the most discreet woman, and in love we are all fools alike. Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced that Polly Peachum is actually his wife. Did I let him escape (fool that I was!) to go to her? Polly will wheedle herself into his money, and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

LOCKIT. So I am to be ruined, because, forsooth, you must be in love!—a very pretty excuse!

LUCY. I could murder that impudent happy strumpet! I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it. Ungrateful Macheath!

AIR [II]—*South-sea Ballad*



My love is all madness and folly,
Alone I lie,
Toss, tumble, and cry;
What a happy creature is Polly!
Was e'er such a wretch as I!
With rage I redden like scarlet,
That my dear, inconstant varlet,
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot![1]
This, this my resentment alarms.

[1] The quarto gives the chorus twice.

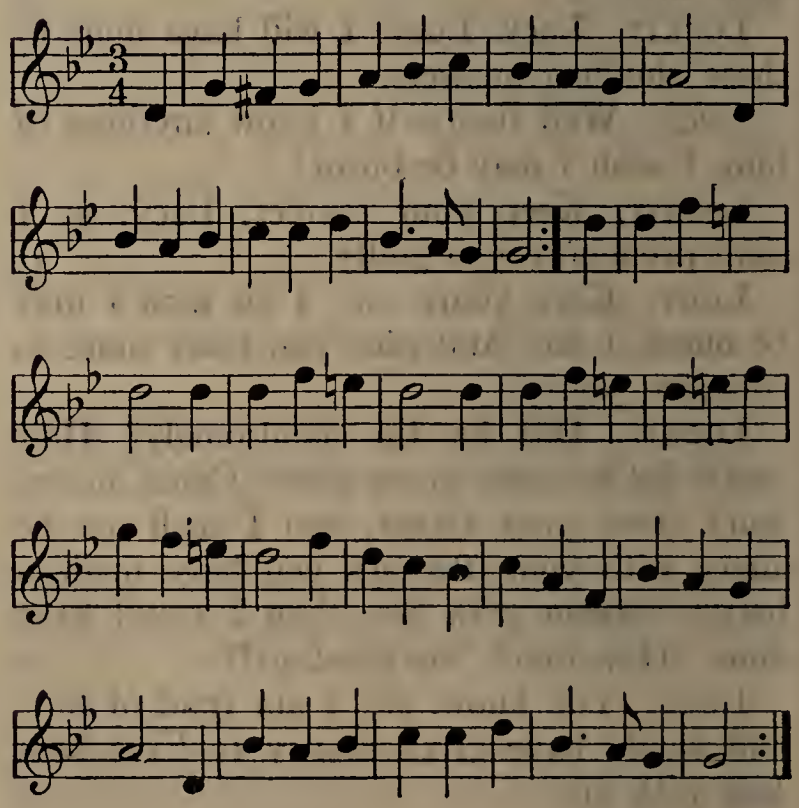
LOCKIT. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay here to be entertained with your caterwauling, mistress Puss! Out of my sight, wanton strumpet! You shall fast and mortify yourself into reason, with now and then a little handsome discipline to bring you to your senses. Go! [*Exit* LUCY]

SCENE II

LOCKIT

—Peachum then intends to outwit me in this affair, but I'll be even with him. The dog is leaky in his liquor; so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. Lions, wolves, and vultures don't live together in herds, droves, or flocks. Of all animals of prey, man is the only sociable one. Every one of us preys upon his neighbor, and yet we herd together. Peachum is my companion, my friend. According to the custom of the world, indeed, he may quote thousands of precedents for cheating me. And shall not I make use of the privilege of friendship to make him a return?

AIR [III]—*Packington's Pound*



Thus gamesters united in friendship are found,
Though they know that their industry all is a cheat;
They flock to their prey at the dice-box's sound,
And join to promote one another's deceit.
But if by mishap
They fail of a chap,
To keep in their hands, they each other entrap.
Like pikes, lank with hunger, who miss of their ends,
They bite their companions, and prey on their friends.

Now, Peachum, you and I, like honest tradesmen, are to have a fair trial which of us two can over-reach the other. [*Calls*] Lucy!

Enter Lucy

Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters in the next room with Black Moll.

Lockit. Bid him come to me.

[*Exit* Lucy]

Scene III

Lockit, Filch

Lockit. Why, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved—like a shotten herring.

Filch. One had need have the constitution of a horse to go through the business. Since the favorite child-getter was disabled by a mishap, I have picked up a little money by helping the ladies to a pregnancy against their being called down to sentence. But if a man cannot get an honest livelihood any easier way, I am sure 'tis what I can't undertake for another session.

Lockit. Truly, if that great man should tip off, 'twould be an irreparable loss. The vigor and prowess of a knight-errant never saved half the ladies in distress that he hath done.—But, boy, canst thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, sir, at the Crooked Billet.

Lockit. Very well. I have nothing more with you.

Exit Filch

I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him; and in the way of those transactions, I'll artfully get into his secret, so that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out o' my clutches.

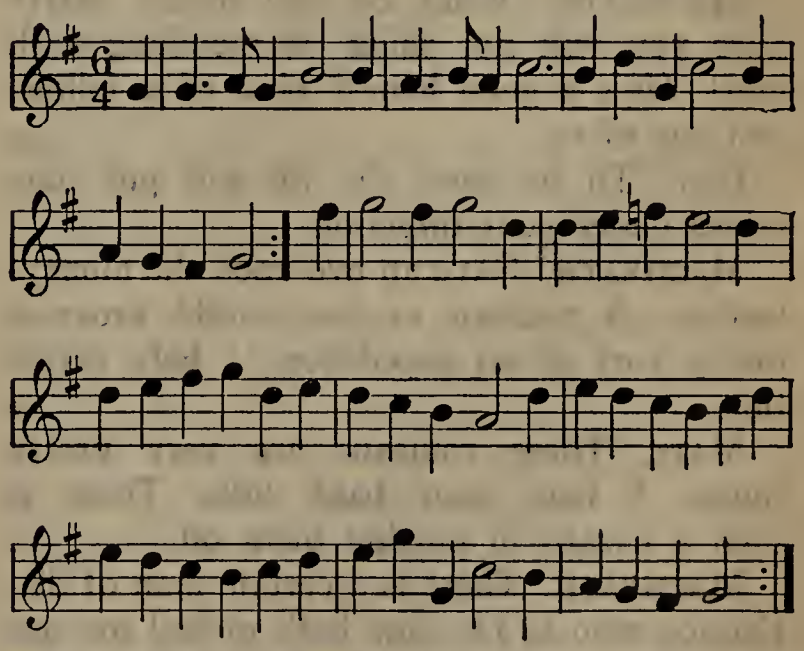
[*Exit*]

Scene IV. *A gaming-house*

Macheath *in a fine tarnished coat*, Ben Budge, Matt of the Mint

Macheath. I am sorry, gentlemen, the road was so barren of money. When my friends are in difficulties, I am always glad that my fortune can be serviceable to them. (*Gives them money*) You see, gentlemen, I am not a mere court friend, who professes everything and will do nothing.

Air [IV]—*Lillibullero*



The modes of the court so common are grown,
That a true friend can hardly be met;
Friendship for interest is but a loan,
Which they let out for what they can get.
'Tis true, you find
Some friends so kind,
Who will give you good counsel themselves to defend.
In sorrowful ditty,
They promise, they pity,
But shift you, for money, from friend to friend.

But we, gentlemen, have still honor enough to break through the corruptions of the world. And while I can serve you, you may command me.

BEN. It grieves my heart that so generous a man should be involved in such difficulties as oblige him to live with such ill company, and herd with gamesters.

MATT. See the partiality of mankind! One man may steal a horse, better than another look over a hedge. Of all mechanics, of all servile handicrafts-men, a gamester is the vilest. But yet, as many of the quality are of the profession, he is admitted amongst the politest company. I wonder we are not more respected.

MACHEATH. There will be deep play to-night at Marybone and consequently money may be picked up upon the road. Meet me there, and I'll give you the hint who is worth setting.

MATT. The fellow with a brown coat with narrow gold binding, I am told, is never without money.

MACHEATH. What do you mean, Matt? Sure you will not think of meddling with him! He's a good honest kind of a fellow, and one of us.

BEN. To be sure, sir, we will put ourselves under your direction.

MACHEATH. Have an eye upon the money-lenders. A rouleau or two would prove a pretty sort of an expedition. I hate extortion.

MATT. These rouleaus are very pretty things. I hate your bank bills. There is such a hazard in putting them off.

MACHEATH. There is a certain man of distinction who in his time hath nicked me out of a great deal of the ready. He is in my cash, Ben. I'll point him out to you this evening, and you shall draw upon him for the debt.—The company are met; I hear the dice-box in the other room. So, gentlemen, your servant! You'll meet me at Marybone.

[*Exit* MACHEATH *and* Followers]

SCENE V. PEACHUM'S *lock. A table with wine, brandy, pipes and tobacco*

PEACHUM, LOCKIT

LOCKIT. The Coronation account, brother Peachum, is of so intricate a nature, that I believe it will never be settled.

PEACHUM. It consists, indeed, of a great variety of articles. It was worth to our people, in fees of different kinds, above ten instalments. This is part of the account, brother, that lies open before us.

LOCKIT. A lady's tail of rich brocade—that, I see, is disposed of—

PEACHUM. To Mrs. Diana Trapes, the tally-woman, and she will make a good hand on't in shoes and slippers, to trick out young ladies upon their going into keeping.

LOCKIT. But I don't see any article of the jewels.

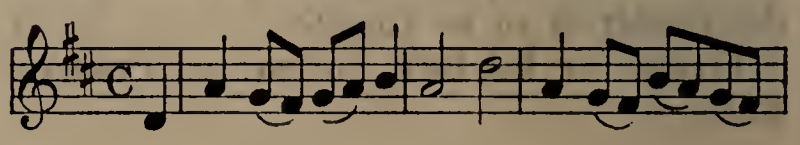
PEACHUM. Those are so well known that they must be sent abroad. You'll find them entered under the article of exportation. As for the snuff-boxes, watches, swords, etc., I thought it best to enter them under their several heads.

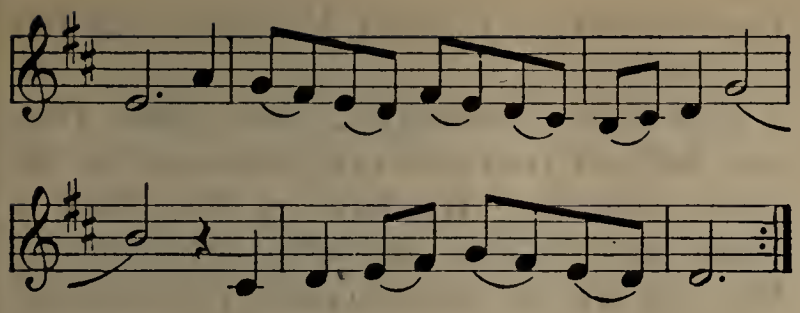
LOCKIT. Seven and twenty women's pockets complete, with the several things therein contained—all sealed, numbered, and entered.

PEACHUM. But, brother, it is impossible for us now to enter upon this affair.—We should have the whole day before us.—Besides, the account of the last half-year's plate is in a book by itself, which lies at the other office.

LOCKIT. Bring us then more liquor.—To-day shall be for pleasure—to-morrow for business.—Ah, brother, those daughters of our are two slippery hussies. Keep a watchful eye upon Polly, and Macheath in a day or two shall be our own again.

AIR [V]—*Down in the North Country, etc.*





LOCKIT.

What gudgeons are we men!
  Ev'ry woman's easy prey,
Though we have felt the hook, again
  We bite and they betray.
The bird that hath been trapped,
  When he hears his calling mate,
To her he flies, again he's clapped
  Within the wiry grate.

PEACHUM. But what signifies catching the bird if your daughter Lucy will set open the door of the cage?

LOCKIT. If men were answerable for the follies and frailties of their wives and daughters, no friends could keep a good correspondence together for two days.—This is unkind of you, brother; for among good friends, what they say or do goes for nothing.

Enter a Servant

SERVANT. Sir, here's Mrs. Diana Trapes wants to speak with you.

PEACHUM. Shall we admit her, brother Lockit?

LOCKIT. By all means—she's a good customer, and a fine-spoken woman—and a woman who drinks and talks so freely, will enliven the conversation.

PEACHUM. Desire her to walk in.

Exit Servant

SCENE VI

PEACHUM, LOCKIT, MRS. TRAPES

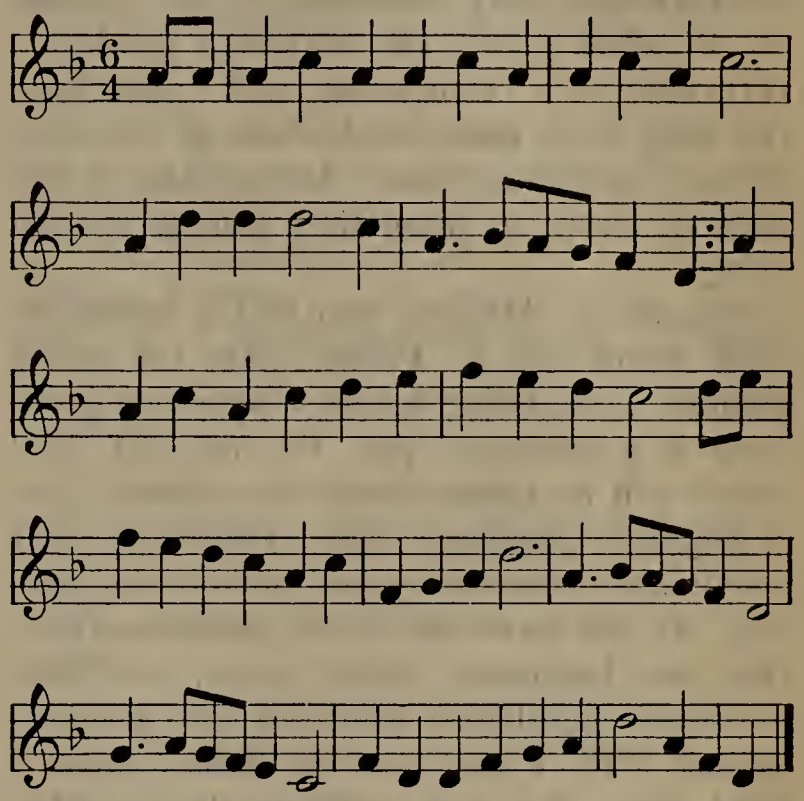
PEACHUM. Dear Mrs. Dye, your servant—one may know by your kiss, that your gin is excellent.

TRAPES. I was always very curious in my liquors.

LOCKIT. There is no perfumed breath like it. I have been long acquainted with the flavor of those lips—han't I, Mrs. Dye?

TRAPES. Fill it up.—I take as large draughts of liquor as I did of love.—I hate a flincher in either.

AIR [VI]—*A shepherd kept sheep, etc.*



In the days of my youth I could bill like a dove, *fa, la, la,* [*la, la, la, de riddle laddy.*]
Like a sparrow at all times was ready for love, *fa, la, la,* etc.
The life of all mortals in kissing should pass,
Lip to lip while we're young—then the lip to the glass, *fa,* [*de riddle laddy, etc.*]

But now, Mr. Peachum, to our business.—If you have blacks of any kind, brought in of late; mantoes—velvet scarfs—petticoats—let it be what it will, I am your chap—for all my ladies are very fond of mourning.

PEACHUM. Why, look ye, Mrs. Dye—you deal so hard with us, that we can afford to give the gentlemen who venture their lives for the goods, little or nothing.

TRAPES. The hard times oblige me to go very near in my dealing. To be sure, of late years I have been a great sufferer by the parliament.—Three thousand pounds would hardly make me amends.—The act for destroying the Mint was a severe cut upon our business—'till then, if a customer stepped out of the way—we knew where to have her. No doubt you know Mrs. Coaxer—there's

a wench now (till to-day) with a good suit of clothes of mine upon her back, and I could never set eyes upon her for three months together. Since the act too against imprisonment for small sums, my loss there too hath been very considerable; and it must be so, when a lady can borrow a handsome petticoat, or a clean gown, and I not have the least hank upon her! And, o' my conscience, nowadays most ladies take a delight in cheating, when they can do it with safety! 45

PEACHUM. Madam, you had a handsome gold watch of us t'other day for seven guineas. Considering we must have our profit —to a gentleman upon the road, a gold watch will be scarce worth the taking. 50

TRAPES. Consider, Mr. Peachum, that watch was remarkable[1] and not of very safe sale. If you have any black velvet scarfs—they are handsome winter wear, and take with most gentlemen who deal with my customers. 'Tis I that put the ladies upon a good foot. 'Tis not youth or beauty that fixes their price. The gentlemen always pay according to their dress, from half a crown to two guineas; and yet those hussies make nothing of bilking me. Then, too, allowing for accidents.—I have eleven fine customers now down under the surgeon's hands; what with fees and other expenses, there are great goings-out, and no comings-in, and not a farthing to pay for at least a month's cloathing. We run great risks—great risks, indeed.

PEACHUM. As I remember, you said something just now of Mrs. Coaxer. 69

TRAPES. Yes, sir. To be sure, I stripped her of a suit of my own clothes about two hours ago, and have left her as she should be, in her shift, with a lover of hers, at my house. She called him upstairs as he was going to Marybone in a hackney coach. And I hope, for her own sake and mine, she will persuade the captain to redeem her, for the captain is very generous to the ladies. 78

LOCKIT. What captain?

TRAPES. He thought I did not know him —an intimate acquaintance of yours, Mr. Peachum—only Captain Macheath—as fine as a lord. 83

PEACHUM. To-morrow, dear Mrs. Dye, you shall set your own price upon any of the goods you like. We have at least half a dozen velvet scarfs, and all at your service. Will you give me leave to make you a present of this suit of nightclothes for your own wearing?—But are you sure it is Captain Macheath? 91

TRAPES. Though he thinks I have forgot him, nobody knows him better. I have taken a great deal of the captain's money in my time at second-hand, for he always loved to have his ladies well dressed. 96

PEACHUM. Mr. Lockit and I have a little business with the captain—you understand me—and we will satisfy you for Mrs. Coaxer's debt. 100

LOCKIT. Depend upon it—we will deal like men of honor.

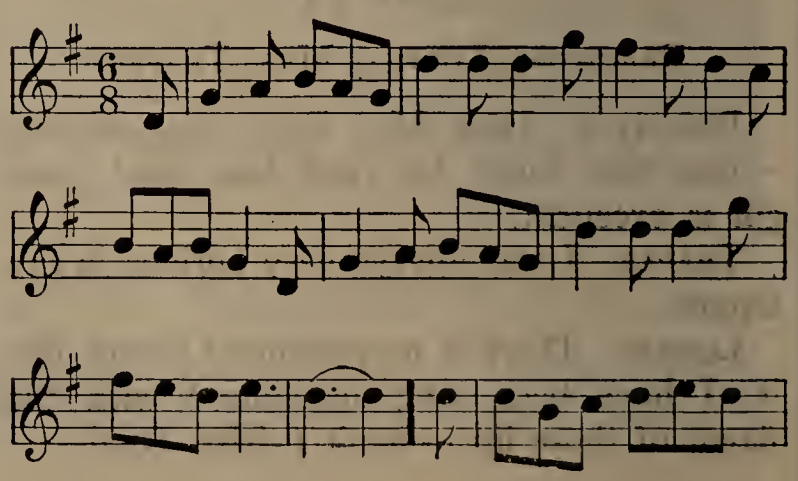
TRAPES. I don't enquire after your affairs —so whatever happens, I wash my hands on't. It hath always been my maxim, that one friend should assist another.—But if you please, I'll take one of the scarfs home with me. 'Tis always good to have something in hand. 109

SCENE VII. *Newgate*

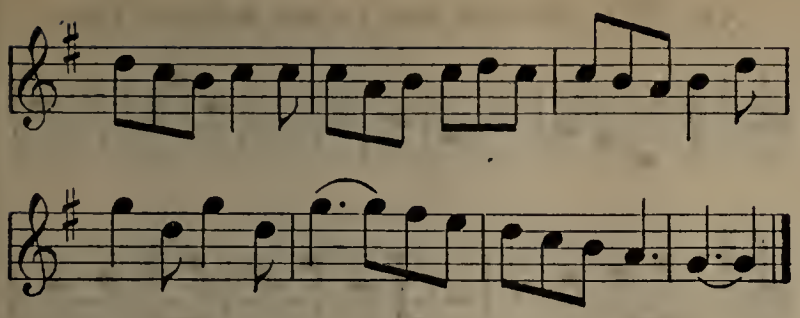
LUCY

LUCY. Jealously, rage, love, and fear are at once tearing me to pieces. How I am weather-beaten and shattered with distresses!

AIR [VII]—*One evening, having lost my way, etc.*



[1] noteworthy.



I'm like a skiff on the ocean tossed,
Now high, now low, with each billow borne;
With her rudder broke, and her anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.

While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight!
Revenge, revenge, revenge,
Shall appease my restless sprite.

—I have the ratsbane ready. I run no risk; for I can lay her death upon the gin, and so many die of that naturally that I shall never be called in question. But say I were to be hanged—I never could be hanged for anything that would give me greater comfort than the poisoning that slut.

Enter FILCH

FILCH. Madam, here's our Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

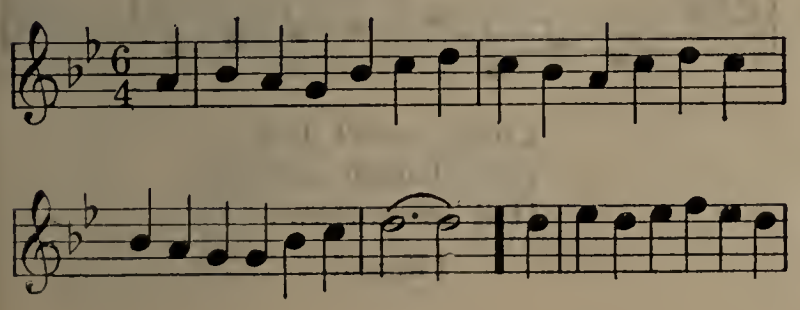
LUCY. Show her in.

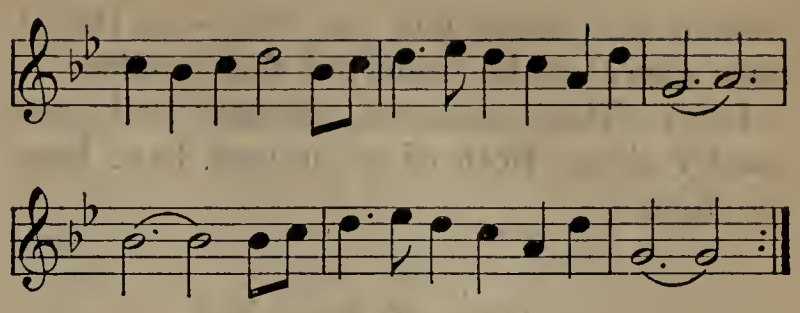
SCENE VIII

LUCY, POLLY

LUCY. Dear madam, your servant. I hope you will pardon my passion when I was so happy to see you last. I was so overrun with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself. And really when one hath the spleen, everything is to be excused by a friend.

AIR [VIII]—*Now Roger, I'll tell thee, because thou'rt my son*





When a wife's in her pout,
(As she's sometimes, no doubt);
The good husband, as meek as a lamb,
Her vapors to still,
First grants her her will,
And the quieting draught is a dram.
Poor man! And the quieting draught is a dram.

—I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

POLLY. I have no excuse for my own behavior, madam, but my misfortunes. And really, madam, I suffer too upon your account.

LUCY. But, Miss Polly—in the way of friendship, will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?

POLLY. Strong waters are apt to give me the headache; I hope, madam, you will excuse me.

LUCY. Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet, for her own private drinking. You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear.

POLLY. I am sorry, madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer. I should not have left you in the rude manner I did when we met last, madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly. I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions that were disrespectful. But really, madam, the captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved your pity, rather than your resentment.

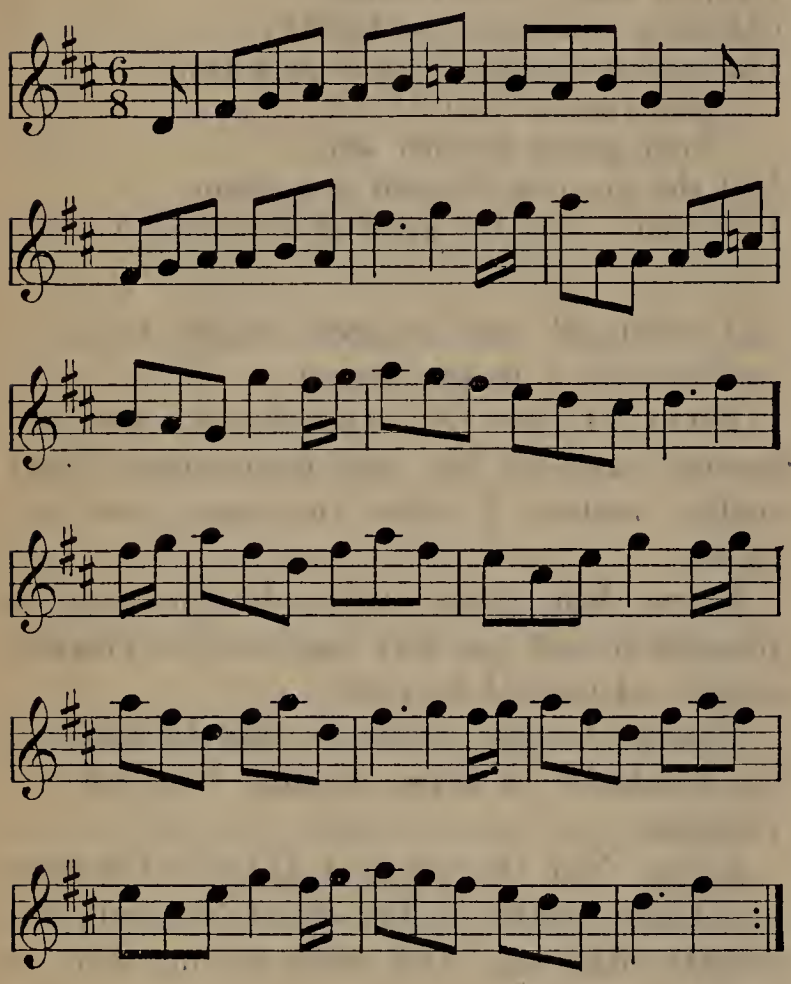
LUCY. But since his escape, no doubt, all matters are made up again.—Ah Polly! Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy wife, and he loves you as if you were only his mistress.

POLLY. Sure, madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy! A man is always afraid of a

woman who loves him too well—so that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our cases, my dear Polly, are exactly alike. Both of us, indeed, have been too fond. 52

Air [IX]—*O Bessy Bell*

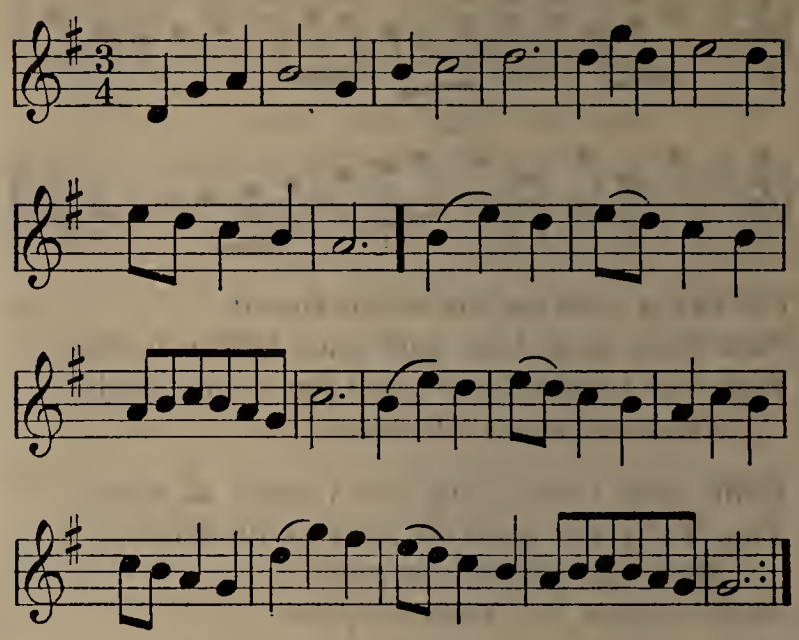


Polly. A curse attends that woman's love,
Who always would be pleasing.
Lucy. The pertness of the billing dove, 55
Like tickling, is but teasing.
Polly. What then in love can woman do?
Lucy. If we grow fond they shun us.
Polly. And when we fly them, they pursue.
Lucy. But leave us when they've won us. 60

Lucy. Love is so very whimsical in both sexes, that it is impossible to be lasting. But my heart is particular, and contradicts my own observation.

Polly. But really, mistress Lucy, by his last behavior, I think I ought to envy you. When I was forced from him, he did not shew the least tenderness. But perhaps he hath a heart not capable of it. 69

Air [X]—*Would fate to me Belinda give*

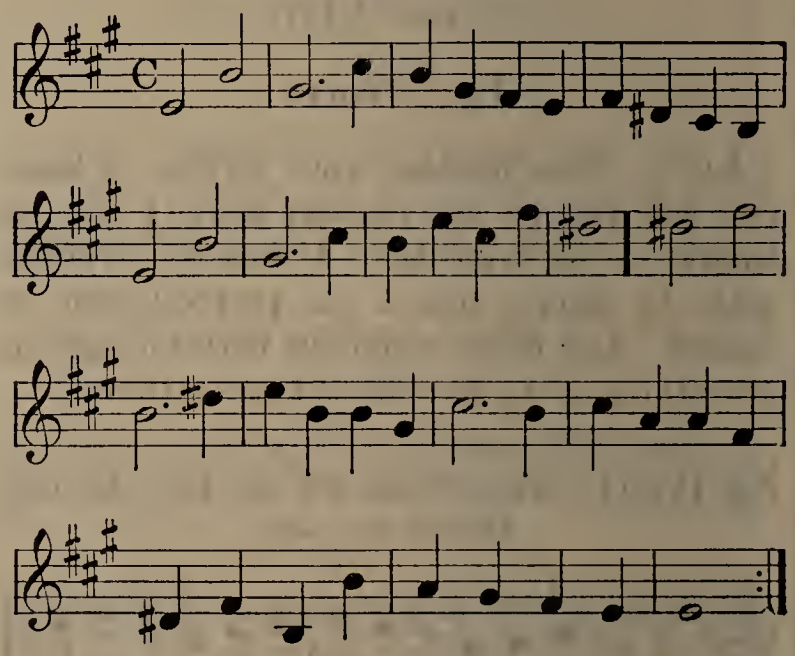


Among the men, coquets we find,
Who court by turns all womankind;
And we grant all their hearts desired,
When they are flattered and admired.[1]

The coquets of both sexes are self-lovers, and that is a love no other whatever can dispossess. I fear, my dear Lucy, our husband is one of those. 77

Lucy. Away with these melancholy reflections!—indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a cup too low. [*Going*] Let me prevail upon you to accept of my offer.

Air [XI]—*Come, sweet lass, etc.*



Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow
'Till to-morrow;

1 Repeat.

Come, sweet lass,
Let's take a chirping glass.
Wine can clear
The vapors of despair;
And make us light as air;
Then drink, and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits. And I must persuade you to what I know will do you good. [*Aside*] I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical strumpet.

[*Exit* LUCY]

SCENE IX

POLLY

POLLY. All this wheedling of Lucy cannot be for nothing—at this time too, when I know she hates me! The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief. By pouring strong waters down my throat, she thinks to pump some secrets out of me. I'll be upon my guard and won't taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

SCENE X

[*Re-enter*] LUCY, *with strong waters*; POLLY

LUCY. Come, Miss Polly.

POLLY. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose.—You must, my dear, excuse me.

LUCY. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters as a lady before company. I vow, Polly, I shall take it monstrously ill if you refuse me.—Brandy and men (though women love them never so well) are always taken by us with some reluctance—unless 'tis in private.

POLLY. I protest, madam, it goes against me. [*Looking off-stage*] What do I see! Macheath again in custody!—Now every glimmering of happiness is lost.

(*Drops the glass of liquor on the ground*)

LUCY. (*Aside*) Since things are thus, I am glad the wench hath escaped: for by this event, 'tis plain, she was not happy enough to deserve to be poisoned.

SCENE XI

LOCKIT, MACHEATH, PEACHUM, LUCY, POLLY

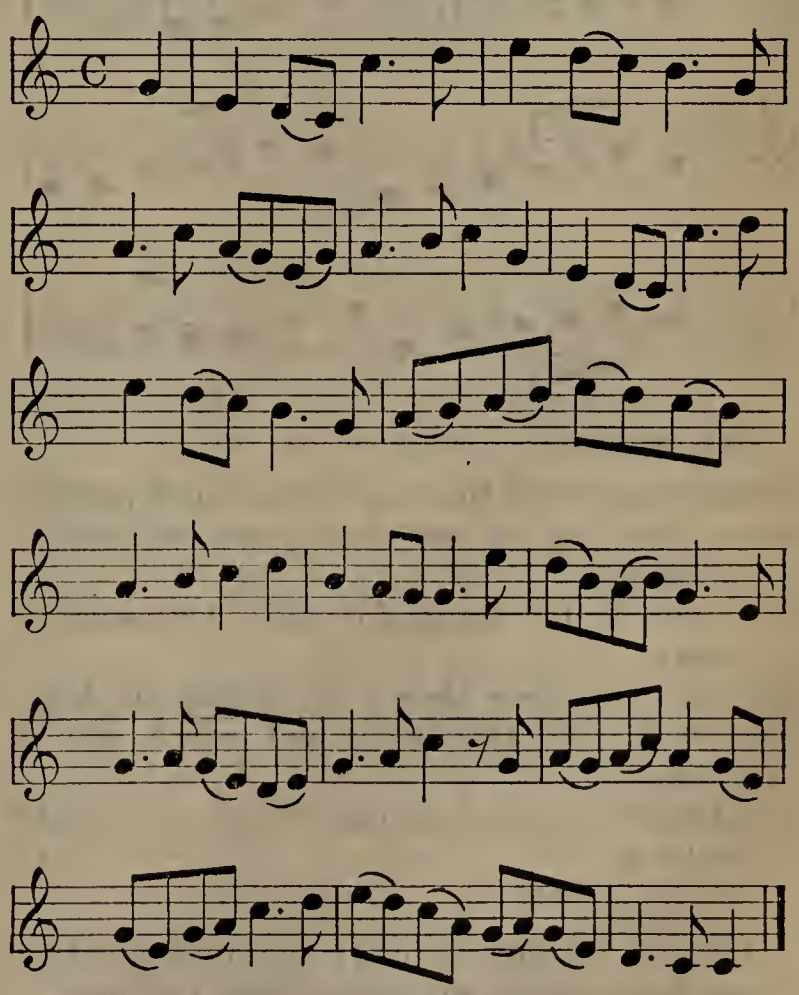
LOCKIT. Set your heart to rest, captain.—You have neither the chance of love, or money for another escape; for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

PEACHUM. Away, hussies!—This is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives. You see, the gentleman is in chains already.

LUCY. O husband, husband, my heart longed to see thee; but to see thee thus distracts me!

POLLY. Will not my dear husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? With me thou hadst been safe.

AIR [XII]—*The last time I went o'er the moor*



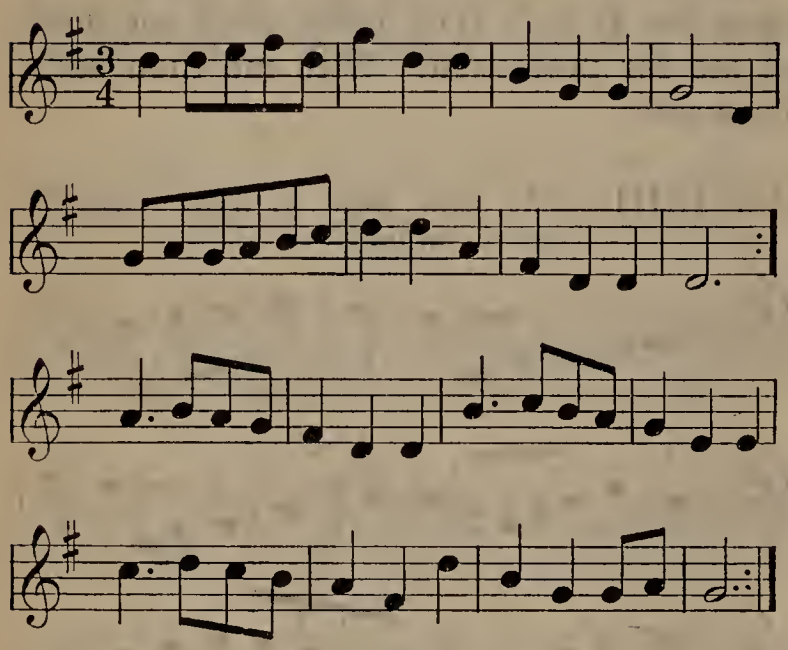
POLLY. Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes.
LUCY. Bestow one glance to cheer me.
POLLY. Think, with that look, thy Polly dies.
LUCY. Oh shun me not—but hear me.
POLLY. 'Tis Polly sues.

LUCY. —'Tis Lucy speaks.
POLLY. Is thus true love requited?
LUCY. My heart is bursting.
POLLY. —Mine too breaks.
LUCY. Must I?
POLLY. —Must I be slighted?

MACHEATH. What would you have me say, ladies?—You see, this affair will soon be at an end without my disobliging either of you.

PEACHUM. But the settling this point, captain, might prevent a lawsuit between your two widows.

AIR [XIII]—*Tom Tinker's my true love*

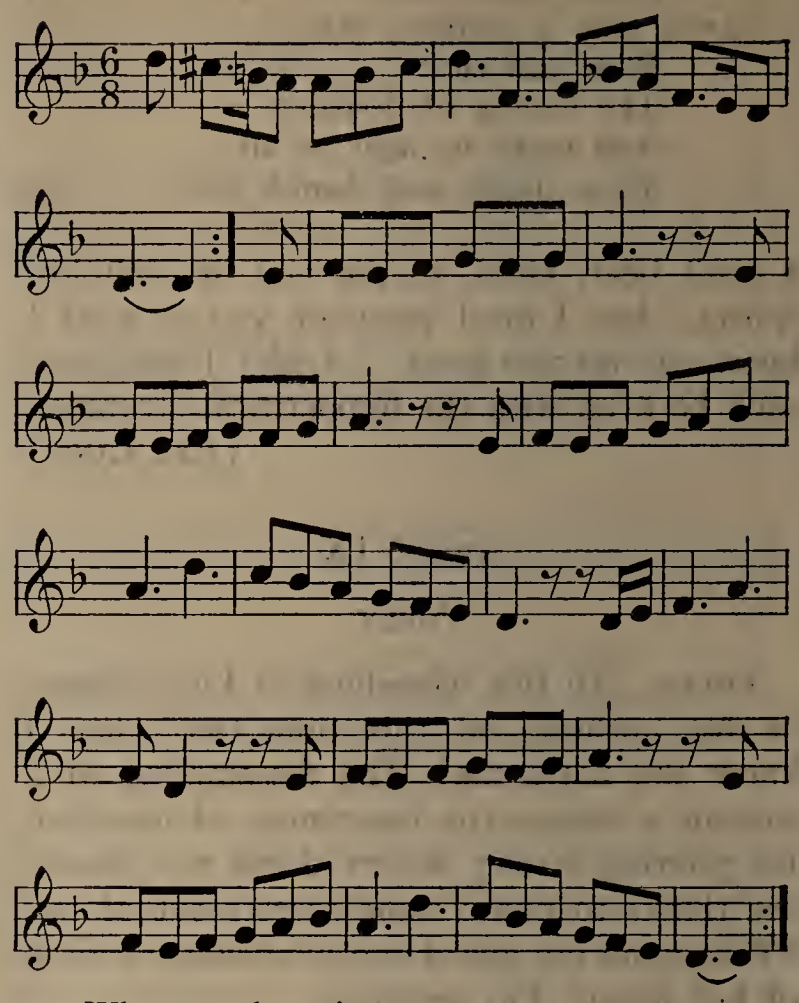


MACHEATH.

Which way shall I turn me? How can I decide?
Wives, the day of our death, are as fond as a bride.
One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,
But two at a time there's no mortal can bear.
This way, and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t'other wife would take ill.

POLLY. [*Aside*] But if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine—a father sure will be more compassionate.—[*To* PEACHUM] Dear, dear sir, sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial! Polly upon her knees begs it of you.

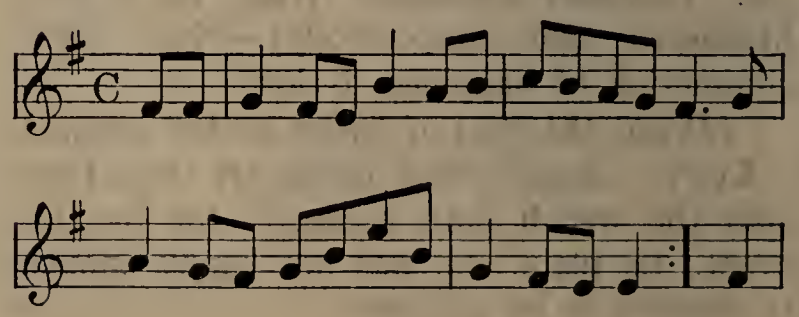
AIR [XIV]—*I am a poor shepherd undone*

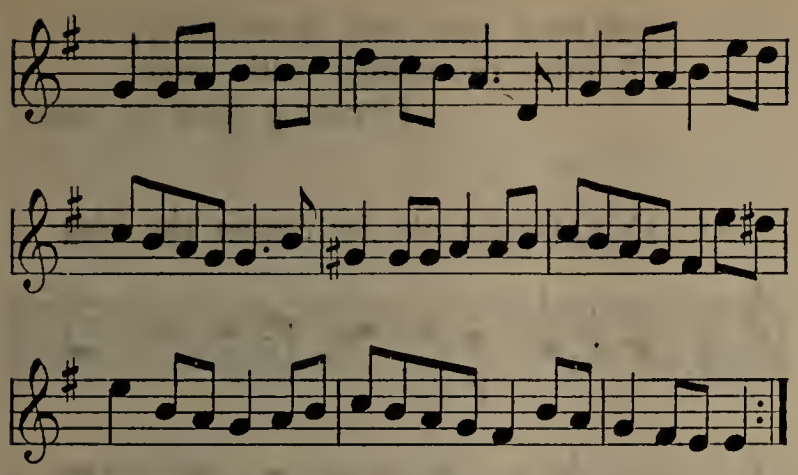


When my hero in court appears,
And stands arraigned for his life;
Then think of poor Polly's tears;
For ah! poor Polly's his wife.
Like the sailor he holds up his hand,
Distressed on the dashing wave.
To die a dry death at land,
Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.
And alas, poor Polly;
Alack, and well-a-day!
Before I was in love,
Oh, every month was May!

LUCY. ([*To* LOCKIT], *kneeling*) If Peachum's heart is hardened, sure you, sir, will have more compassion on a daughter. I know the evidence is in your power. How then can you be a tyrant to me?

AIR [XV]—*Ianthe the lovely, etc.*





When he holds up his hand arraigned for his life,
Oh, think of your daughter, and think I'm his wife!
What are cannons, or bombs, or clashing of swords?
For death is more certain by witnesses' words.
Then nail up their lips; that dread thunder allay;
And each month of my life will hereafter be May.[1]

LOCKIT. Macheath's time is come, Lucy. We know our own affairs; therefore let us have no more whimpering or whining.

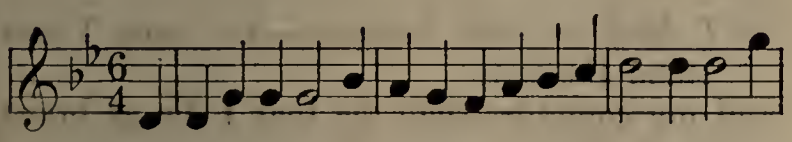
AIR [ ]—*A cobbler there was,*[2] *etc.*

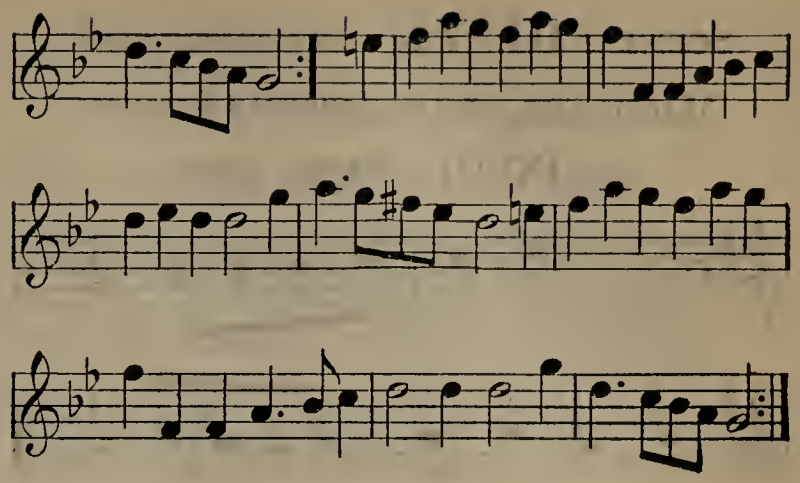
Ourselves, like the great, to secure a retreat,
When matters require it, must give up our gang.
And good reason why,
Or instead of the fry,
Ev'n Peachum and I,
Like poor petty rascals, might hang, hang;
Like poor petty rascals might hang.

PEACHUM. Set your heart at rest, Polly. Your husband is to die to-day! therefore, if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another.—There's comfort for you, you slut.

LOCKIT. We are ready, sir, to conduct you to the Old Bailey.

AIR [XVI]—*Bonny Dundee*





MACHEATH.

The charge is prepared; the lawyers are met,
The judges all ranged (a terrible show!).
I go, undismayed—for death is a debt,
A debt on demand. So, take what I owe.
Then farewell, my love—dear charmers, adieu.
Contented I die—'tis the better for you.
Here ends all dispute the rest of our lives,
For this way at once I please all my wives.

—Now, gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

[*Exeunt* MACHEATH, LOCKIT, *and* PEACHUM]

SCENE XII

LUCY, POLLY, FILCH

POLLY. Follow them, Filch, to the court; and when the trial is over, bring me a particular account of his behavior, and of everything that happened.—You'll find me here with Miss Lucy.

Exit FILCH

But why is all this music?

LUCY. The prisoners whose trials are put off till next sessions are diverting themselves.

POLLY. Sure there is nothing so charming as music! I'm fond of it to distraction!—But alas! now, all mirth seems an insult upon my affliction.—Let us retire, my dear Lucy, and indulge our sorrows.—The noisy crew, you see, are coming upon us. *Exeunt*

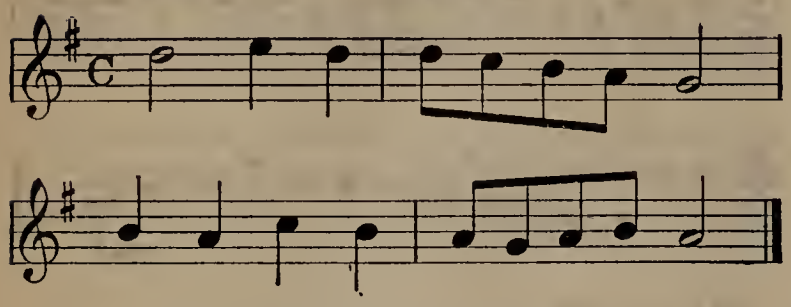
(*A dance of prisoners in chains, etc.*)

1 Repeat two lines.
2 Not in the first edition.

SCENE XIII. *The condemned hold*

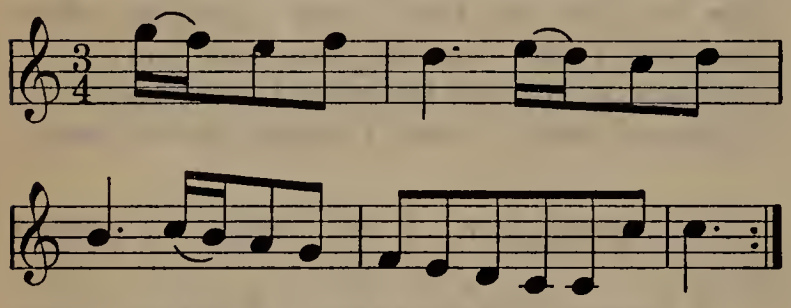
MACHEATH, *in a melancholy posture*

AIR [XVII]—*Happy groves*



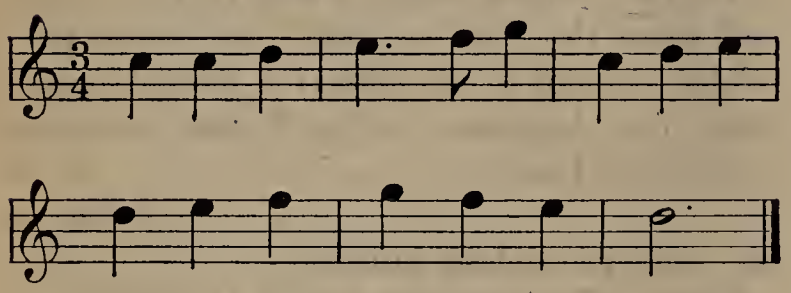
O cruel, cruel, cruel case!
Must I suffer this disgrace?

AIR [XVIII]—*Of all the girls that are so smart*



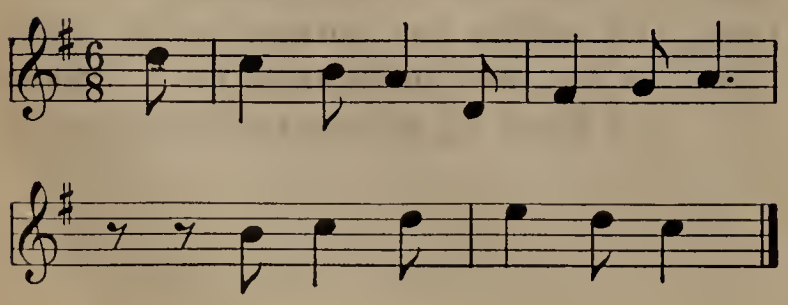
Of all the friends in time of grief,
When threat'ning death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring relief,
As this best friend, a brimmer.
(*Drinks*)

AIR [XIX]—*Britons, strike home*



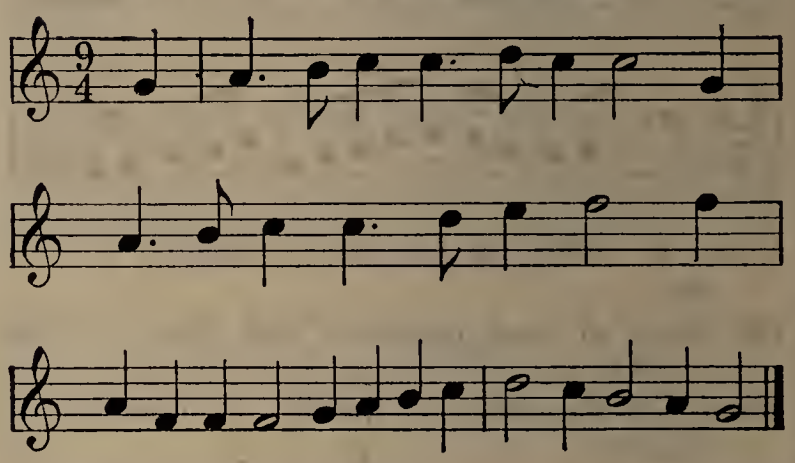
Since I must swing,—I scorn, I scorn to wince or whine.
(*Rises*)

AIR [XX]—*Chevy Chase*



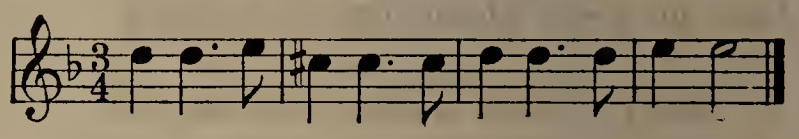
But now again my spirits sink;
I'll raise them high with wine.
(*Drinks a glass of wine*)

AIR [XXI]—*To old Sir Simon the king*



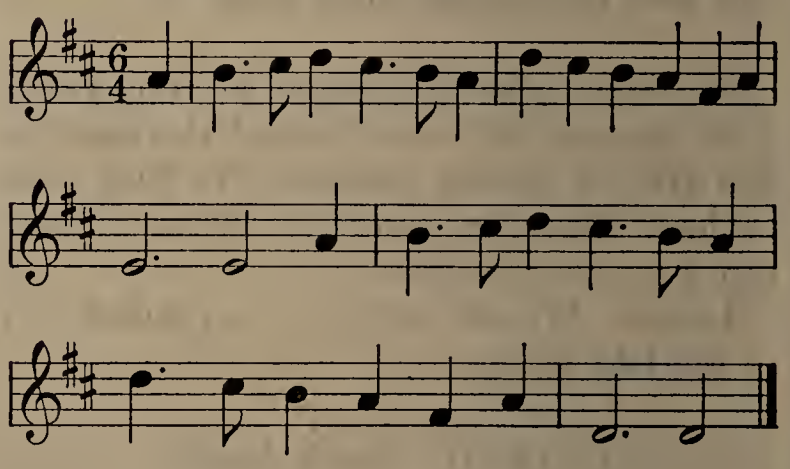
But valor the stronger grows,
The stronger liquor we're drinking.
And how can we feel our woes,
When we've left the trouble of thinking?
(*Drinks*)

AIR [XXII]—*Joy to great Cæsar*



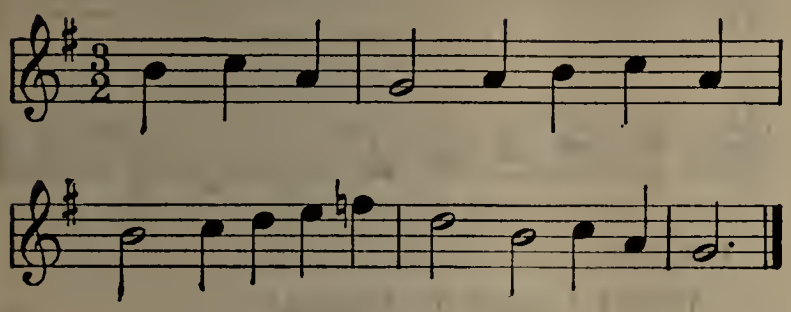
If thus—a man can die.
Much bolder with brandy.
(*Pours out a bumper of brandy*)

AIR [XXIII]—*There was an old woman*



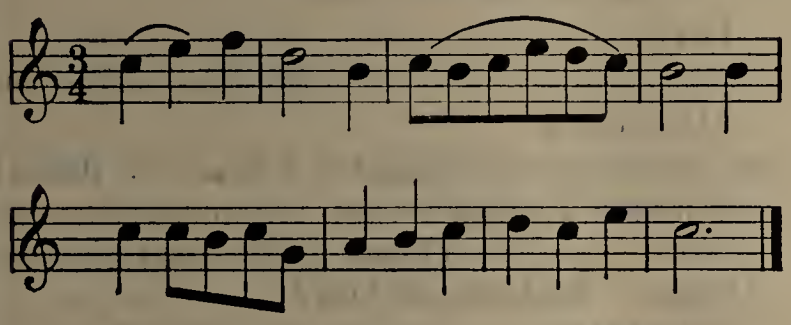
So I drink off this bumper.—And now I can stand the test.
And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as the best.
(*Drinks*)

AIR [XXIV]—*Did you ever hear of a gallant sailor*



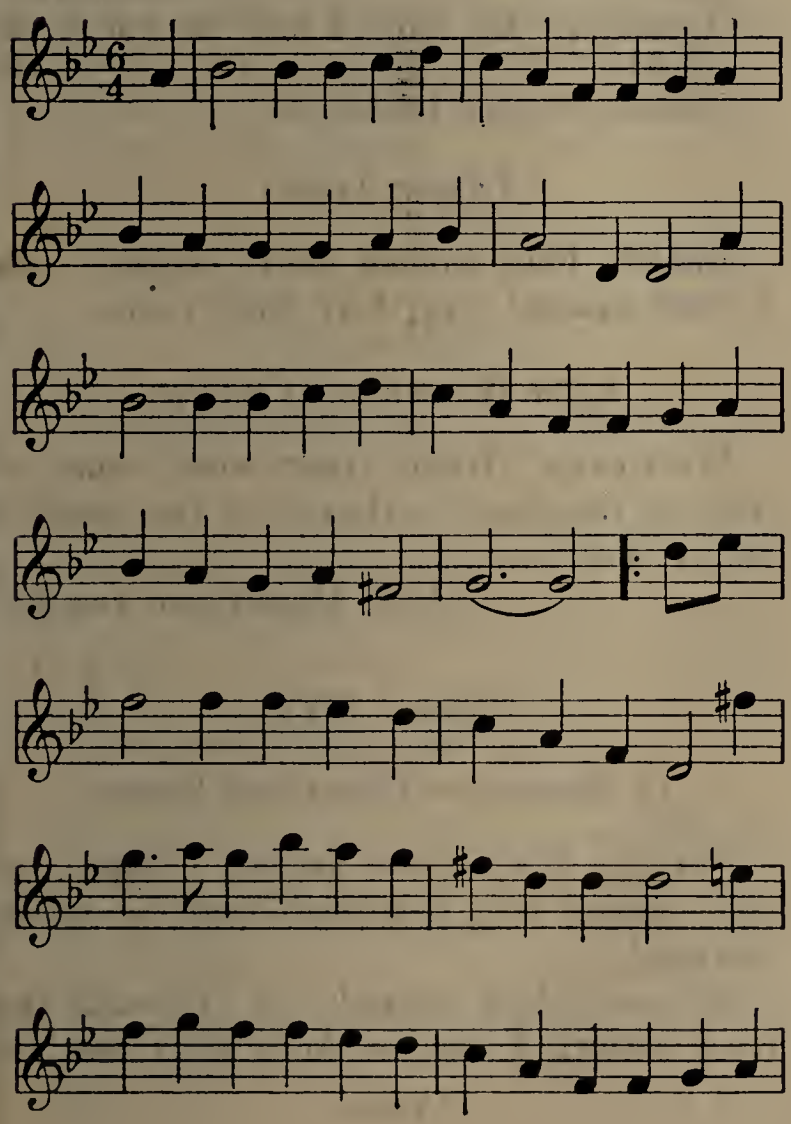
But can I leave my pretty hussies,
Without one tear, or tender sigh?

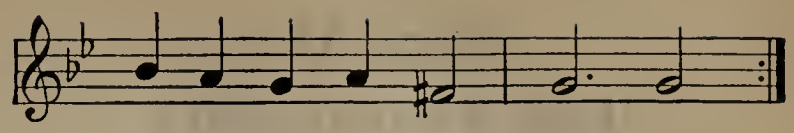
AIR [XXV]—*Why are mine eyes still flowing*



Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recall my love.—Ah, must I die?

AIR [XXVI]—*Greensleeves*





Since laws were made for ev'ry degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as me,
I wonder we han't better company,
Upon Tyburn tree!
But gold from law can take out the sting;
And if rich men like us were to swing,
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree!

[*Enter a* Jailor]

JAILOR. Some friends of yours, captain, desire to be admitted.—I leave you together.

[*Exit* Jailor]

SCENE XIV

MACHEATH, BEN BUDGE, MATT OF THE MINT

MACHEATH. For my having broke prison, you see, gentlemen, I am ordered immediate execution. The sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door. That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me, I own surprised me! 'Tis a plain proof that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people. Therefore, I beg you, gentlemen, look well to yourselves, for in all probability you may live some months longer.

MATT. We are heartily sorry, captain, for your misfortune.—But 'tis what we must all come to.

MACHEATH. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous scoundrels. Their lives are as much in your power, as yours are in theirs. Remember your dying friend!—'Tis my last request. Bring those villains to the gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

MATT. We'll do't.

[*Re-enter* Jailor]

JAILOR. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word with you.

MACHEATH. Gentlemen, adieu.

[*Exeunt* BEN, MATT, *and* Jailor]

Scene XV

Lucy, Macheath, Polly

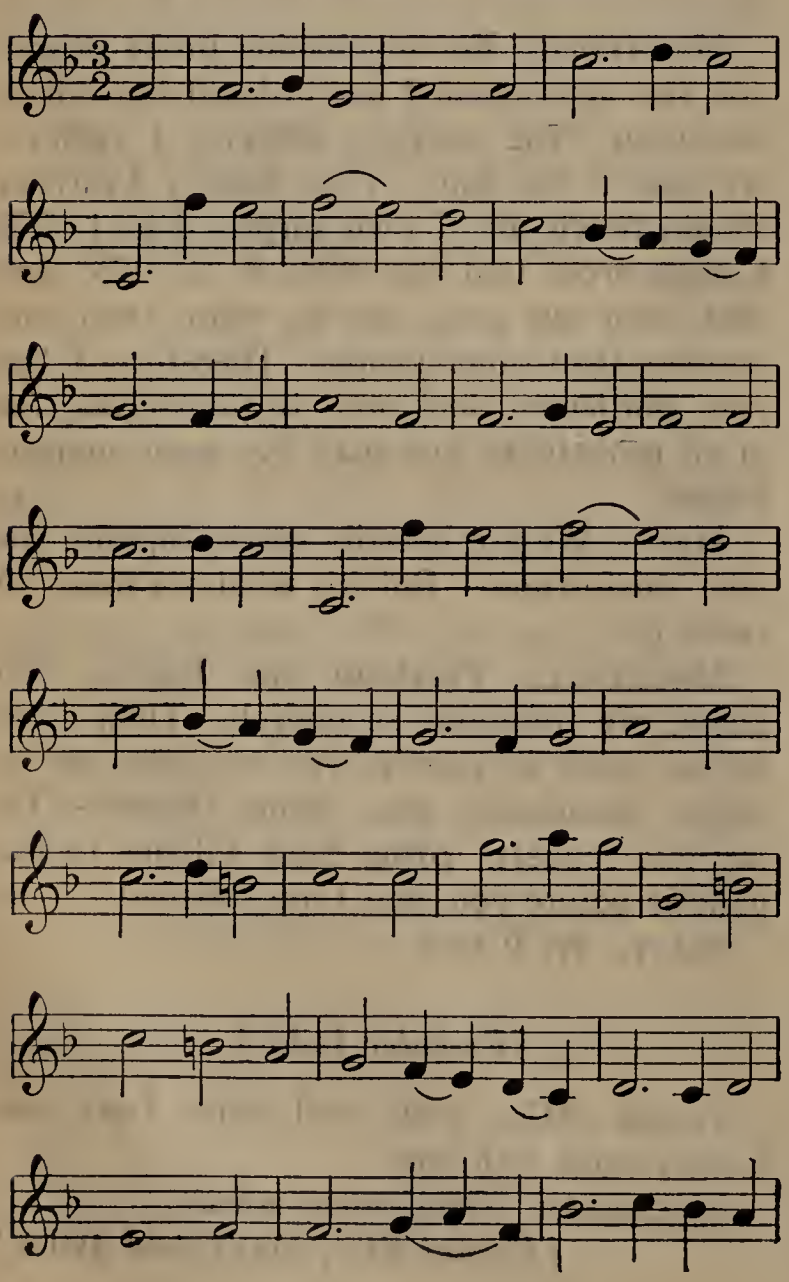
Macheath. My dear Lucy—my dear Polly! Whatsoever hath passed between us, is now at an end. If you are fond of marrying again, the best advice I can give you is to ship yourselves off for the West Indies, where you'll have a fair chance of getting a husband apiece—or by good luck, two or three, as you like best.

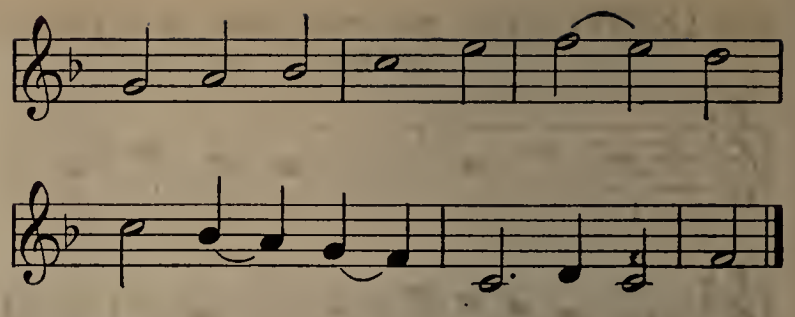
Polly. [*Aside*] How can I support this sight?

Lucy. [*Aside*] There is nothing moves one so much as a great man in distress.

[*They sing*]

Air [XXVII]—*All you that must take a leap, etc.*





Lucy.
Would I might be hanged!

Polly.
—And I would so too!

Lucy.
To be hanged with you.

Polly.
—My dear, with you.

Macheath.
Oh, leave me to thought! I fear! I doubt! I tremble! I droop!—See, my courage is out.
(*Turns up the empty bottle*)

Polly. No token of love?

Macheath. —See, my courage is out.
(*Turns up the empty pot*)

Lucy. No token of love?

Polly. —Adieu.

Lucy. —Farewell!

Macheath. But hark! I hear the toll of the bell![1]

Chorus. Tol de rol lol, etc.

[*Enter* Jailor]

Jailor. Four women more, captain, with a child apiece! See, here they come.

Enter Women *and* Children

Macheath. What—four wives more!—This is too much.—Here, tell the sheriff's officers I am ready.

Exit Macheath *guarded*

Scene XVI

To them enter Player *and* Beggar

Player. But, honest friend, I hope you don't intend that Macheath shall be really executed.

Beggar. Most certainly, sir. To make the piece perfect, I was for doing strict poetical

[1] Repeat.

justice. Macheath is to be hanged; and for the other personages of the drama, the audience must have supposed they were all either hanged or transported. 9

PLAYER. Why then, friend, this is a downright deep tragedy. The catastrophe is manifestly wrong, for an opera must end happily.

BEGGAR. Your objection, sir, is very just, and is easily removed; for you must allow that in this kind of drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about. So —you rabble there! run and cry a reprieve! —let the prisoner be brought back to his wives in triumph. 19

PLAYER. All this we must do, to comply with the taste of the town.

BEGGAR. Through the whole piece you may observe such a similitude of manners in high and low life, that it is difficult to determine whether (in the fashionable vices) the fine gentlemen imitate the gentlemen of the road, or the gentlemen of the road the fine gentlemen. Had the play remained as I at first intended, it would have carried a most excellent moral. 'Twould have shown that the lower sort of people have their vices in a degree as well as the rich, and that they are punished for them. 33

SCENE XVII

To them MACHEATH, *with rabble, etc.*

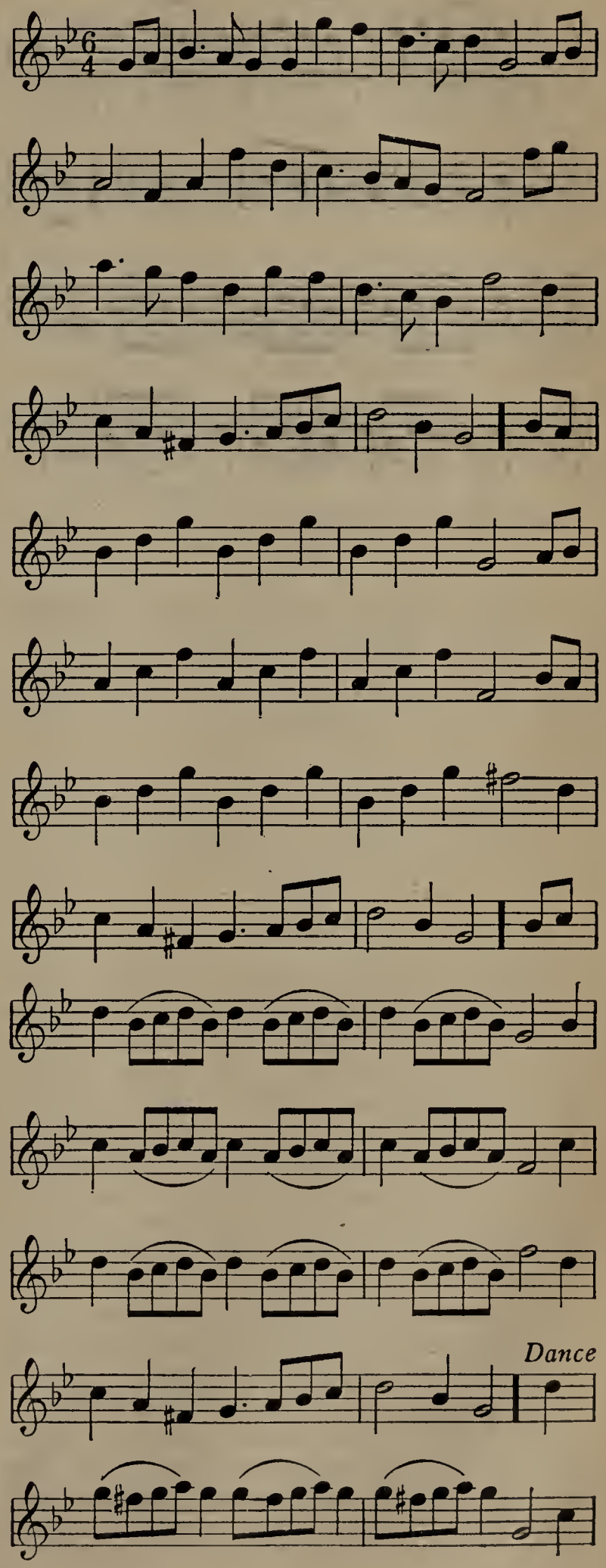
MACHEATH. So it seems I am not left to my choice, but must have a wife at last.— Look ye, my dears, we will have no controversy now. Let us give this day to mirth, and I am sure she who thinks herself my wife will testify her joy by a dance. 6

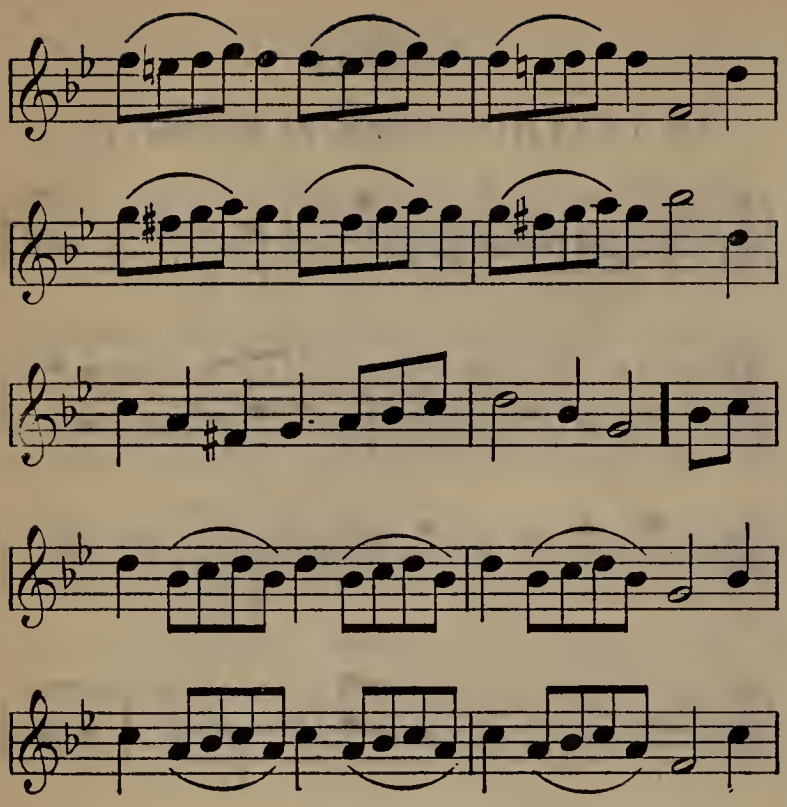
ALL. Come, a dance—a dance!

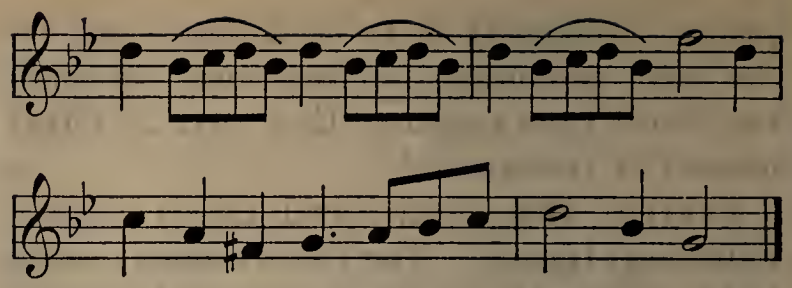
MACHEATH. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a partner to each of you. And (if I may without offence) for this time, I take Polly for mine. (*To* POLLY) And for life, you slut, for we were really married. As for the rest—but at present keep your own secret. 14

A DANCE

AIR [XXVIII]—*Lumps of pudding, etc.*







Thus I stand like the Turk, with his doxies around;
From all sides their glances his passion confound:
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns.
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his desires; 19
Though willing to all, with but one he retires.
But think of this maxim, and put off your sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.
CHORUS. But think of this maxim, etc.

THE TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES, OR THE LIFE AND DEATH OF TOM THUMB THE GREAT

WITH THE ANNOTATIONS OF H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS

[By Henry Fielding]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

King Arthur, a passionate sort of king, husband to Queen Dollallolla, of whom he stands a little in fear; father to Huncamunca, whom he is very fond of, and in love with Glumdalca

Tom Thumb the Great, a little hero with a great soul, something violent in his temper, which is a little abated by his love for Huncamunca

Ghost of Gaffer Thumb, a whimsical sort of ghost

Lord Grizzle, extremely zealous for the liberty of the subject, very choleric in his temper, and in love with Huncamunca

Merlin, a conjurer, and in some sort father to Tom Thumb

Noodle, Doodle } courtiers in place, and consequently of that party that is uppermost

Foodle, a courtier that is out of place, and consequently of that party that is undermost

Bailiff and Follower } of the party of the plaintiff

Parson, of the side of the church

1 Physician

2 Physician

Women

Queen Dollallolla, wife to King Arthur, and mother to Huncamunca, a woman entirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to drink; a little too much a virago towards her husband, and in love with Tom Thumb

The Princess Huncamunca, daughter to their Majesties King Arthur and Queen Dollallolla, of a very sweet, gentle, and amorous disposition, equally in love with Lord Grizzle and Tom Thumb, and desirous to be married to them both

Glumdalca, of the giants, a captive queen, beloved by the king, but in love with Tom Thumb

Cleora, Mustacha } maids of honor in love with Noodle and Doodle

Courtiers, Guards, Rebels, Drums, Trumpets, Thunder and Lightning, Slaves, Bailiffs, etc.

Scene: *The court of King Arthur, and a plain thereabouts*

H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS

HIS PREFACE

The town hath seldom been more divided in its opinion than concerning the merit of the following scenes. Whilst some publicly affirmed that no author could produce so fine a piece but Mr. P[ope], others have with as much vehemence insisted that no one could write anything so bad but Mr. F[ielding].

Nor can we wonder at this dissension about its merit, when the learned world have not unanimously decided even the very nature of this tragedy. For tho' most of the universities in Europe have honored it with the name of *egregium et maximi pretii opus, tragoediis tam antiquis quam novis longe anteponendum*; nay, Dr. B[entley] hath pronounced, *Citius Maevii Aeneadem quam Scribleri istius tragoediam hanc crediderim, cujus auctorem Senecam ipsum tradidisse haud dubitarim*; and the great Professor Burman hath styled *Tom Thumb*,

Heroum omnium tragicorum facile principem. Nay, tho' it hath, among other languages, been translated into Dutch, and celebrated with great applause at Amsterdam (where burlesque never came) by the title of *Mynheer Vander Thumb*, the burgomasters receiving it with that reverent and silent attention which becometh an audience at a deep tragedy: nothwithstanding all this, there have not been wanting some who have represented these scenes in a ludicrous light; and Mr. D[ennis] hath been heard to say with some concern, that he wondered a tragical and Christian nation would permit a representation on its theatre so visibly designed to ridicule and extirpate everything that is great and solemn among us.

This learned critic and his followers were led into so great an error by that surreptitious and piratical copy which stole last year into the world—with what injustice and prejudice to our author, I hope will be acknowledged by everyone who shall happily peruse this genuine and original copy. Nor can I help remarking, to the great praise of our author, that however imperfect the former was, still did even that faint resemblance of the true *Tom Thumb* contain sufficient beauties to give it a run of upwards of forty nights to the politest audiences. But, notwithstanding that applause which it received from all the best judges, it was as severely censured by some few bad ones and, I believe, rather maliciously than ignorantly reported to have been intended a burlesque on the loftiest parts of tragedy and designed to banish what we generally call "fine things" from the stage.

Now, if I can set my country right in an affair of this importance, I shall lightly esteem any labor which it may cost. And this I the rather undertake; first, as it is indeed in some measure incumbent on me to vindicate myself from that surreptitious copy before mentioned, published by some ill-meaning people under my name; secondly, as knowing myself more capable of doing justice to our author than any other man, as I have given myself more pains to arrive at a thorough understanding of this little piece, having for ten years together read nothing else; in which time I think [I] may modestly presume with the help of my English dictionary to comprehend all the meanings of every word in it.

But should any error of my pen awaken Clariss. Bentleium to enlighten the world with his annotations on our author, I shall not think that the least reward or happiness arising to me from these my endeavors.

I shall waive at present what hath caused such feuds in the learned world, whether this piece was originally written by Shakespeare, tho' certainly that, were it true, must add a considerable share to its merit, especially with such as are so generous as to buy and to commend what they never read, from an implicit faith in the author only—a faith which our age abounds in as much as it can be called deficient in any other.

Let it suffice that the *Tragedy of Tragedies*, or, *The Life and Death of Tom Thumb*, was written in the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*. Nor can the objection be made by Mr. D[ennis] that the tragedy must then have been antecedent to the history, have any weight, when we consider that tho' the *History of Tom Thumb*, printed by and for *Edward M[idwinte]r*, at the Looking-Glass on London Bridge, be of a later date; still must we suppose this history to have been transcribed from some other, unless we suppose the writer thereof to be inspired, a gift very faintly contended for by the writers of our age. As to this history's not bearing the stamp of second, third, or fourth, edition, I see but little in that objection, editions being very uncertain lights to judge of books by; and perhaps Mr. M[idwinte]r may have joined twenty editions in one, as Mr. C[url]l hath ere now divided one into twenty.

Nor doth the other argument, drawn from the little care our author hath taken to keep up to the letter of the history, carry any greater force. Are there not instances of plays wherein the history is so perverted that we can know the heroes whom they celebrate by no other marks than their names? Nay, do we not find the same character placed by different poets in such different lights that we can discover not the least sameness or even likeness in the features? The *Sophonisba* of Mairet and of Lee is a tender, passionate, amorous mistress of Massinissa. Corneille and Mr. Thomson gave her no other passion but the love of her country, and made her as cool in her affection to Massinissa as to Syphax. In the two latter she resembles the character of Queen Elizabeth; in the two former, she is the picture of Mary, Queen of Scotland. In short, the one Sophonisba is as different from the other as the *Brutus* of Voltaire is from the *Marius, Jun.* of Otway, or as the *Minerva* is from the *Venus* of the ancients.

Let us now proceed to a regular examination

of the tragedy before us, in which I shall treat separately of the fable, the moral, the characters, the sentiments, and the diction. And first of the fable, which I take to be the most simple imaginable, and, to use the words of an eminent author,[1] "One, regular, and uniform, not charged with a multiplicity of incidents, and yet affording several revolutions of fortune by which the passions may be excited, varied, and driven to their full tumult of emotion." Nor is the Action of this tragedy less great than uniform. The spring of all is the love of Tom Thumb for Huncamunca, which causeth the quarrel between their majesties in the first act; the passion of Lord Grizzle in the second; the rebellion, fall of Lord Grizzle and Glumdalca, devouring of Tom Thumb by the cow, and that bloody catastrophe, in the third.

Nor is the Moral of this excellent tragedy less noble than the Fable. It teaches these two instructive lessons, viz.: that human happiness is exceeding transient, and that death is the certain end of all men, the former whereof is inculcated by the fatal end of Tom Thumb, the latter by that of all the other personages.

The characters are, I think, sufficiently described in the *Dramatis Personae*, and I believe we shall find few plays where greater care is taken to maintain them throughout and to preserve in every speech that characteristic mark which distinguishes them from each other. "But," says Mr. D[ennis], "how well does the character of Tom Thumb, whom we must call the hero of this tragedy—if it hath any hero—agree with the precepts of Aristotle, who defineth tragedy to be the imitation of a short but perfect action containing a just greatness in itself, etc.? What greatness can be in a fellow whom History relateth to have been no higher than a span?" This gentleman seemeth to think, with Sergeant Kite,[2] that the greatness of a man's soul is in proportion to that of his body, the contrary of which is affirmed by our English physiognomical writers. Besides, if I understand Aristotle right, he speaketh only of the greatness of the action, and not of the person.

As for the sentiments and diction, which now only remain to be spoken to: I thought I could afford them no stronger justification than by producing parallel passages out of the best of our English writers. Whether this sameness of thought and expression which I have quoted from them proceeded from an agreement in their way of thinking or whether they have borrowed from our author, I leave the reader to determine. I shall adventure to affirm this of the sentiments of our author, that they are generally the most familiar which I have ever met with and at the same time delivered with the highest dignity of phrase; which brings me to speak of his Diction. Here I shall only beg one postulatum, viz: that the greatest perfection of the language of a tragedy is, that it is not to be understood, which granted (as I think it must be), it will necessarily follow that the only way to avoid this is by being too high or too low for the understanding, which will comprehend everything within its reach. These two extremities of style Mr. Dryden illustrates by the familiar image of two inns,[3] which I shall term the aërial and the subterrestrial.

Horace goes farther, and sheweth when it is proper to call at one of these inns, and when at the other:

Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exsul uterque,
Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.

That he approveth of the *sesquipedalia verba* is plain; for had not Telephus [and] Peleus used this sort of diction in prosperity, they could not have dropped it in adversity. The aërial inn, therefore, says Horace, is proper only to be frequented by princes and other great men in the highest affluence of fortune; the subterrestrial is appointed for the entertainment of the poorer sort of people only, whom Horace advises *dolere sermone pedestri*; the true meaning of both which citations is, that bombast is the proper language for joy and doggerel for grief, the latter of which is literally implied in the *sermone pedestri* as the former is in the *sesquipedalia verba*.

Cicero recommendeth the former of these. *Quid est tam furiosum vel tragicum quam verborum sonitus inanis, nullā subjectā sententiā neque scientiā.* What can be so proper for tragedy as a set of big-sounding words, so contrived together as to convey no meaning?—which I shall one day or other prove to be the sublime of Longinus. Ovid declareth absolutely for the latter inn: *Omne genus scripti gravitate tragoedia vincit.* Tragedy hath of all writings the greatest share in the bathos, which is the profound of Scriblerus.

1 James Thomson, preface to *Sophonisba* (H.).
2 In Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*.
3 See *An Essay of Heroic Plays*.

I shall not presume to determine which of these two styles be properer for tragedy. It sufficeth that our author excelleth in both. He is very rarely without sight through the whole play, either rising higher than the eye of your understanding can soar or sinking lower than it careth to stoop. But here it may perhaps be observed that I have given more frequent instances of authors who have imitated him in the sublime than in the contrary. To which I answer: First, bombast being properly a redundancy of genius, instances of this nature occur in poets whose names do no more honor to our author than the writers in the doggerel which proceeds from a cool, calm, weighty way of thinking—instances whereof are most frequently to be found in authors of a lower class; secondly, that the works of such authors are difficultly found at all; thirdly, that it is a very hard task to read them, in order to extract these flowers from them; and lastly, it is very often difficult to transplant them at all, they being like some flowers of a very nice nature which will flourish in no soil but their own. For it is easy to transcribe a thought, but not the want of one. The Earl of Essex, for instance, is a little garden of choice rarities whence you can scarce transplant one line so as to preserve its original beauty. This must account to the reader for his missing the names of several of his acquaintance, which he had certainly found there had I ever read their works; for which, if I have not a just esteem, I can at least say with Cicero, *Quae non contemno, quippe quae nunquam legerim.* However, that the reader may meet with due satisfaction in this point, I have a young commentator from the University who is reading over all the modern tragedies, at five shillings a dozen, and collecting all that they have stole from our author, which shall shortly be added as an appendix to this work.

ACT I

SCENE I. [*Court of*] *the Palace*

DOODLE, NOODLE

DOODLE. Sure such a[1] day as this was never seen!
The sun himself, on this auspicious day,
Shines like a beau in a new birthday suit:
This down the seams embroidered, that the beams.
All nature wears one universal grin.
NOODLE. This day, O Mr. Doodle, is a day.
Indeed!—A day,[2] we never saw before.

[1] Corneille recommends some very remarkable day wherein to fix the action of a tragedy. This the best of our tragical writers have understood to mean a day remarkable for the serenity of the sky, or what we generally call a fine summer's day: so that, according to this their exposition, the same months are proper for tragedy which are proper for pastoral. Most of our celebrated English tragedies, as *Cato,* [Fenton's] *Mariamne*, *Tamerlane*, etc., begin with their observations on the morning. Lee seems to have come the nearest to this beautiful description of our author's:

The morning dawns with an unwonted crimson,
The flowers all odorous seem, the garden birds
Sing louder, and the laughing sun ascends
The gaudy earth with an unusual brightness:
All nature smiles. *Cæs. Borg.*

Massinissa, in the *New Sophonisba* [Thomson's], is also a favorite of the sun:

——The sun too seems
As conscious of my joy, with broader eye
To look abroad the world, and all things smile
Like Sophonisba.

Memnon, in the *Persian Princess* [Theobald's], makes the sun decline rising, that he may not peep on objects which would profane his brightness:

——The morning rises slow,
And all those ruddy streaks that used to paint
The day's approach are lost in clouds, as if
The horrors of the night had sent 'em back,
To warn the sun he should not leave the sea,
To peep, etc.

[2] This line is highly conformable to the beautiful simplicity of the ancients. It hath been copied by almost every modern.

Not to be is not to be in woe.
[DRYDEN'S] *State of Innocence*

Love is not sin but where 'tis sinful love.
Don Sebastian

Nature is nature, Lælius.
[LEE'S] *Sophonisba*

Men are but men, we did not make ourselves.
[YOUNG'S] *Revenge*

The mighty[3] Thomas Thumb victorious comes;
Millions of giants crowd his chariot wheels,
Giants! to whom the giants in Guildhall
Are infant dwarfs. They frown, and foam, and roar.
While Thumb, regardless of their noise, rides on.[4]
So some cock-sparrow in a farmer's yard,
Hops at the head of an huge flock of turkeys.
DOODLE. When Goody Thumb first brought this Thomas forth,
The Genius of our land triumphant reigned;
Then, then, O Arthur! did thy Genius reign.
NOODLE. They tell me it is[5] whispered in the books
Of all our sages, that this mighty hero,
By Merlin's art begot, hath not a bone
Within his skin, but is a lump of gristle.
DOODLE. Then 'tis a gristle of no mortal kind;
Some God, my Noodle, stepped into the place
Of Gaffer Thumb, and more than[6] half begot
This mighty Tom.
NOODLE. [7]—Sure he was sent express
From Heav'n, to be the pillar of our state.
Tho' small his body be, so very small
A chairman's leg is more than twice as large,
Yet is his soul like any mountain big;
And as a mountain once brought forth a mouse,
[8]So doth this mouse contain a mighty mountain.
DOODLE. Mountain indeed! So terrible his name,

Risum teneatis, amici.

[3] Dr. B[entle]y reads, "The mighty Tall-mast Thumb." Mr. D[enni]s, "The mighty Thumbing Thumb." Mr. T[heobal]d reads, "Thundering." I think Thomas more agreeable to the great simplicity so apparent in our author.

[4] That learned historian Mr. S[almo]n, in the third number of his criticism on our author, takes great pains to explode this passage. "It is," says he, "difficult to guess what giants are here meant, unless the giant Despair in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, or the giant Greatness in the *Royal Villain*; for I have heard of no other sort of giants in the reign of king Arthur." Petrus Burmannus makes three Tom Thumbs, one whereof he supposes to have been the same person whom the Greeks call Hercules; and that by these giants are to be understood the Centaurs slain by that hero. Another Tom Thumb he contends to have been no other than the Hermes Trismegistus of the ancients. The third Tom Thumb he places under the reign of king Arthur; to which third Tom Thumb, says he, the actions of the other two were attributed. Now, though I know that this opinion is supported by an assertion of Justus Lipsius, *Thomam illum Thumbum non alium quàm Herculem fuisse satis constat*, yet shall I venture to oppose one line of Mr. Midwinter against them all:

In Arthur's court Tom Thumb did live.

"But then," says Dr. B[entle]y, "if we place Tom Thumb in the court of king Arthur, it will be proper to place that court out of Britain, where no giants were ever heard of." Spenser, in his *Fairy Queen*, is of another opinion, where, describing Albion, he says,

——Far within a savage nation dwelt
Of hideous giants.

And in the same canto:

Then Elfar, with two brethren giants had,
The one of which had two heads—
The other three.

[5] "To whisper in books," says Mr. D[enni]s, "is arrant nonsense." I am afraid this learned man does not sufficiently understand the extensive meaning of the word whisper. If he had rightly understood what is meant by the "senses whispering the soul," in the *Persian Princess*, or what "whispering like winds" is in *Aurengzebe*, or like thunder in another author, he would have understood this. Emmeline in Dryden sees a voice, but she was born blind, which is an excuse Panthea cannot plead in [Banks's] *Cyrus*, who hears a sight:

——Your description will surpass
All fiction, painting, or dumb show of horror,
That ever ears yet heard, or eyes beheld.

When Mr. D[enni]s understands these, he will understand whispering in books.

[6] ——Some ruffian stept into his father's place,
And more than half begot him.
[BANKS'S] *Mary Q[ueen] of Scots*

[7] ——For Ulamar seems sent express from Heaven,
To civilize this rugged Indian clime.
[DENNIS'S] *Liberty Asserted*

[8] *Omne majus continet in se minus, sed minus non in se majus continere potest*, says Scaliger

[9]The giant nurses frighten children with it,
And cry "Tom Thumb is come! and if you are
Naughty, will surely take the child away."

NOODLE. But hark![10] these trumpets speak the king's approach.

DOODLE. He comes most luckily for my petition. (*Flourish*)

SCENE II

KING, QUEEN, GRIZZLE, NOODLE, DOODLE, FOODLE

KING. [11]Let nothing but a face of joy appear;
The man who frowns this day shall lose his head,
That he may have no face to frown withal.
Smile Dollallolla—Ha! what wrinkled sorrow

in Thumbo. I suppose he would have cavilled at these beautiful lines in the *Earl of Essex*:

——Thy most inveterate soul,
That looks through the foul prison of thy body.

And at those of Dryden:

The palace is without too well designed;
Conduct me in, for I will view thy mind.
Aurengzebe

[9]Mr. Banks hath copied this almost verbatim:

It was enough to say, here's Essex come,
And nurses stilled their children with the fright.
Earl of Essex

[10]The trumpet in a tragedy is generally as much as to say, Enter king; which makes Mr. Banks, in one of his plays, call it "the trumpet's formal sound."

[11]Phraortes, in the *Captives* [Gay's], seems to have been acquainted with King Arthur:

Proclaim a festival for seven days' space,
Let the court shine in all its pomp and lustre;
Let all our streets resound with shouts of joy;
Let music's care-dispelling voice be heard;
The sumptuous banquet and the flowing goblet
Shall warm the cheek and fill the heart with gladness.
Astarbe shall sit mistress of the feast.

[12]Hangs, sits, lies, frowns upon thy knitted brow?
Whence flow those tears fast down thy blubbered cheeks,
Like a swol'n gutter, gushing through the streets?

QUEEN. [13]Excess of joy, my lord, I've heard folks say,
Gives tears as certain as excess of grief.

KING. If it be so, let all men cry for joy,
[14]Till my whole court be drownèd with their tears;
Nay, till they overflow my utmost land,
And leave me nothing but the sea to rule.

DOODLE. My liege, I a petition have here got.

KING. Petition me no petitions, sir, today:
Let other hours be set apart for business.

[12]Repentance frowns on thy contracted brow.
[LEE'S] *Sophonisba*

Hung on his clouded brow, I marked despair.
Ibid.

——A sullen gloom
Scowls on his brow. [YOUNG'S] *Busiris*

[13]Plato is of this opinion, and so is Mr. Banks:

Behold these tears sprung from fresh pain and joy.
[BANKS'S] *Earl of Essex*

[14]These floods are very frequent in the tragic authors:

Near to some murmuring brook I'll lay me down,
Whose waters, if they should too shallow flow,
My tears shall swell them up till I will drown.
Sophonisba

Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,
That were the world on fire they might have drowned
The wrath of Heav'n, and quenched the mighty ruin. [LEE'S] *Mithridates*

One author changes the waters of grief to those of joy:

——These tears, that sprung from tides of grief,
Are now augmented to a flood of joy.
[BANKS'S] *Cyrus the Great*

Another:

Turns all the streams of heat, and makes them flow
In pity's channel. [THEOBALD'S] *Royal Villain*

To-day it is our pleasure to be [15] drunk.
And this our queen shall be as drunk as we.
QUEEN. (Tho' I already [16]half seas over am)
If the capacious goblet overflow
With arrack punch—'fore George! I'll see it out:
Of rum and brandy I'll not taste a drop.
KING. Tho' rack, in punch, eight shillings be a quart,
And rum and brandy be no more than six,
Rather than quarrel you shall have your will.
(*Trumpets*)

One drowns himself:

——Pity like a torrent pours me down,
Now I am drowning all within a deluge.
Anna Bullen

Cyrus drowns the whole world:

Our swelling grief
Shall melt into a deluge, and the world
Shall drown in tears. [BANKS's] *Cyrus the Great*

[15]An expression vastly beneath the dignity of tragedy, says Mr. D[enni]s; yet we find the word he cavils at in the mouth of Mithridates less properly used, and applied to a more terrible idea:

I would be drunk with death.
Mithridates

The author of the *New Sophonisba* taketh hold of this monosyllable, and uses it pretty much to the same purpose:

The Carthaginian sword with Roman blood
Was drunk.

I would ask Mr. D[enni]s which gives him the best idea, a drunken king, or a drunken sword?

Mr. Tate dresses up King Arthur's resolution in heroic:

Merry, my lord, o'th' captain's humor right,
I am resolved to be dead drunk to-night.

Lee also uses this charming word:

Love's the drunkenness of the mind.
Gloriana

[16]Dryden hath borrowed this, and applied it improperly:

I'm half seas o'er in death.
Cleomenes

But, ha! the warrior comes—the great Tom Thumb.
The little hero, giant-killing boy,
Preserver of my kingdom, is arrived.

SCENE III

TOM THUMB *to them, with* Officers, Prisoners, *and* Attendants

KING. [17]Oh! welcome most, most welcome to my arms.
What gratitude can thank away the debt
Your valor lays upon me?
QUEEN. (*Aside*)—[18]Oh! ye gods!
THUMB. When I'm not thanked at all, I'm thanked enough.
[19]I've done my duty, and I've done no more.
QUEEN. (*Aside*) Was ever such a god-like creature seen?
KING. Thy modesty's a [20]candle to thy merit;
It shines itself, and shows thy merit too.
But say, my boy, where didst thou leave the giants?
THUMB. My liege, without the castle gates they stand—
The castle gates too low for their admittance.
KING. What look they like?
THUMB. Like nothing but themselves.
QUEEN. (*Aside*) [21]And sure thou art like nothing but thyself.

[17]This figure is in great use among the tragedians:

'Tis therefore, therefore 'tis.
[JOHNSON's] *Victim*

I long, repent, repent, and long again.
Busiris

[18]A tragical exclamation.

[19]This line is copied verbatim in the *Captives*.

[20]We find a candlestick for this candle in two celebrated authors:—

——Each star withdraws
His golden head, and burns within the socket.
[LEE's] *Nero*

A soul grown old and sunk into the socket.
[DRYDEN's] *Sebastian*

[21]This simile occurs very frequently among the dramatic writers of both kinds.

KING. Enough! the vast idea fills my soul.
I see them—yes, I see them now before me:
The monstrous, ugly, barb'rous sons of whores.
But ha! what form majestic strikes our eyes?
[22]So perfect, that it seems to have been drawn
By all the gods in council: so fair she is,
That surely at her birth the council paused,
And then at length cried out, This is a woman!
THUMB. Then were the gods mistaken—she is not
A woman, but a giantess—whom we,
[23]With much ado, have made a shift to haul
Within the town: [24]for she is by a foot
Shorter than all her subject giants were.
GLUMDALCA. We yesterday were both a queen and wife;
One hundred thousand giants owned our sway,
Twenty whereof were married to ourself.
QUEEN. Oh! happy state of giantism! where husbands
Like mushrooms grow, whilst hapless we are forced
To be content, nay, happy thought, with one.
GLUMDALCA. But then to lose them all in one black day,
That the same sun which, rising, saw me wife
To twenty giants, setting should behold
Me widowed of them all.—[25]My worn-out heart,
That ship, leaks fast, and the great heavy lading,
My soul, will quickly sink.
QUEEN. Madam, believe
I view your sorrows with a woman's eye:
But learn to bear them with what strength you may,
To-morrow we will have our grenadiers
Drawn out before you, and you then shall choose
What husbands you think fit.
GLUMDALCA. [26]Madam, I am
Your most obedient and most humble servant.
KING. Think, mighty princess, think this court your own,
Nor think the landlord me, this house my inn;
Call for whate'er you will, you'll nothing pay.
[27]I feel a sudden pain within my breast,

[22]Mr. Lee hath stolen this thought from our author:

This perfect face, drawn by the gods in council,
Which they were long a making.
Luc. Jun. Brut.

——At his birth the heavenly council paused,
And then at last cried out, This is a man!

Dryden hath improved this hint to the utmost perfection:

So perfect, that the very gods who formed you, wondered
At their own skill, and cried, A lucky hit
Has mended our design! Their envy hindered,
Or you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When Heaven would work for ostentation sake,
To copy out again. *All for Love*

Banks prefers the works of Michael Angelo to that of the gods:

A pattern for the gods to make a man by,
Or Michael Angelo to form a statue.

[23]It is impossible, says Mr. W—, sufficiently to admire this natural, easy line.

[24]This tragedy, which in most points resembles the ancients, differs from them in this—that it assigns the same honor to lowness of stature which they did to height. The gods and heroes in Homer and Virgil are continually described higher by the head than their followers, the contrary of which is observed by our author. In short, to exceed on either side is equally admirable; and a man of three foot is as wonderful a sight as a man of nine.

[25]My blood leaks fast, and the great heavy lading
My soul will quickly sink. *Mithridates*
My soul is like a ship. [TATE'S] *Injured Love*

[26]This well-bred line seems to be copied in the *Persian Princess*:—

To be your humblest and most faithful slave.

[27]This doubt of the king puts me in mind of a passage in the *Captives*, where the noise of feet is mistaken for the rustling of leaves.

——Methinks I hear
The sound of feet:
No; 'twas the wind that shook yon cypress boughs.

Nor know I whether it arise from love
Or only the wind-colic. Time must show.
Oh, Thumb! what do we to thy valor owe!
Ask some reward, great as we can bestow.
THUMB. [28]I ask not kingdoms, I can conquer those;
I ask not money, money I've enough;
For what I've done, and what I mean to do,
For giants slain, and giants yet unborn,
Which I will slay—if this be called a debt,
Take my receipt in full: I ask but this,—
[29]To sun myself in Huncamunca's eyes.
KING. Prodigious bold request.
QUEEN. (*Aside*)—[30]Be still, my soul.
THUMB. [31]My heart is at the threshold of your mouth,
And waits its answer there.—Oh! do not frown.
I've tried to reason's tune to tune my soul,
But love did overwind and crack the string.
Tho' Jove in thunder had cried out, YOU SHAN'T,
I should have loved her still—for oh, strange fate!
Then when I loved her least, I loved her most!
KING. It is resolved—the princess is your own.

[28]Mr. Dryden seems to have had this passage in his eye in the first page of *Love Triumphant*.

[29]Don Carlos, in the *Revenge* [Young's], suns himself in the charms of his mistress:

While in the lustre of her charms I lay.

[30]A tragical phrase much in use.

[31]This speech hath been taken to pieces by several tragical authors, who seem to have rifled it and shared its beauties among them.

My soul waits at the portal of thy breast,
To ravish from thy lips the welcome news.
Anna Bullen

My soul stands list'ning at my ears.
Cyrus the Great

Love to his tune my jarring heart would bring,
But reason overwinds, and cracks the string.
Duke of Guise

—I should have loved,
Tho' Jove, in muttering thunder, had forbid it.
New Sophonisba

THUMB. Oh! [32]happy, hap[illegible] happy,
happy Thumb!
QUEEN. Consider, sir; rewar[illegible] your soldier's merit,
But give not Huncamunca to [illegible]om Thumb.
KING. Tom Thumb! Odzook[illegible]! my wide-extended realm
Knows not a name so glori[illegible]s as Tom Thumb.
Let Macedonia Alexander boast,
Let Rome her Cæsars and her Scip[illegible]
Her Messieurs France, let Hollan[illegible] show,
Mynheers, [illegible]oast
Ireland her O's, her Macs let Scotland boa[illegible]
Let England boast no other than Tom Thumb.
QUEEN. Tho' greater yet his boasted merit was,
He shall not have my daughter, that is pos'.
KING. Ha! sayest thou, Dollallolla?
QUEEN. I say he shan't.
KING. [33]Then by our royal self we swear you lie.
QUEEN. [34]Who, but a dog—who, but a dog,
Would use me as thou dost?—me, who have lain
[35]These twenty years so loving by thy side!
But I will be revenged. I'll hang myself.
Then tremble all who did this match persuade,
[36]For, riding on a cat, from high I'll fall,

And when it (*my heart*) wild resolves to love no more,
Then is the triumph of excessive love. *Ibid.*

[32]Massinissa is one-fourth less happy than Tom Thumb:

Oh! happy, happy, happy! *New Sophonisba*

[33]No, by myself. *Anna Bullen*

[34]——Who caused
This dreadful revolution in my fate,
Ulamar? Who, but a dog—who, but a dog?
[DENNIS'S] *Liberty Asserted*

[35]——A bride,
Who twenty years lay loving by your side.
[*Anna Bullen*]

[36]For, borne upon a cloud, from high I'll fall,
And rain down royal vengeance on you all.
The Albion Queens

down royal vengeance on you all.
And squ
FOODLE.
passio
KING.
girl
And pave
ourself
We were in
To truckle
Or art the
Give him
THU
Ec
And beauty, heav'nly beauty! crowns my toils!
I've thrown the bloody garment now aside
And hymeneal sweets invite my bride.
So when some chimney-sweeper all the day
Hath through dark paths pursued the sooty way,
At night to wash his hands and face he flies,
And in his t'other shirt with his Brickdusta lies. [*Exeunt all except* GRIZZLE]

SCENE IV

GRIZZLE, *solus*

GRIZZLE. [40] Where art thou, Grizzle? where are now thy glories?
Where are the drums that wakened thee to honor?

[37] Her majesty the queen is in a
Be she, or be she not, I'll to the
thy way, O Thumb.—Now by
ed a pretty king of clouts
her will.—For when by force
fe her husband over-reaches,
petticoat, and her the breeches.
[39] Whisper ye winds, that Huncha's mine!
repeat, that Huncamunca's mine!
dreadful bus'ness of the war is o'er,

Greatness is a laced coat from Monmouth-street,
Which fortune lends us for a day to wear;
To-morrow puts it on another's back.
The spiteful sun but yesterday surveyed
His rival, high as Saint Paul's cupola;
Now may he see me as Fleet-Ditch laid low.

SCENE V

QUEEN, GRIZZLE

QUEEN. [41] Teach me to scold, prodigious-minded Grizzle.
Mountain of treason, ugly as the devil,
Teach this confounded hateful mouth of mine
To spout forth words malicious as thyself,
Words which might shame all Billingsgate to speak.
GRIZZLE. Far be it from my pride to think my tongue
Your royal lips can in that art instruct,
Wherein you so excel. But may I ask,
Without offence, wherefore my queen would scold?
QUEEN. Wherefore? Oh! blood and thunder! ha'n't you heard
(What ev'ry corner of the court resounds)
That little Thumb will be a great man made?
GRIZZLE. I heard it. I confess—for who, alas!
[42] Can always stop his ears?—But would my teeth,
By grinding knives, had first been set on edge!
QUEEN. Would I had heard, at the still noon of night,
The hallaloo of fire in every street!
Odsbobs! I have a mind to hang myself,
To think I should a grandmother be made
By such a rascal!—Sure, the king forgets

[37] An information very like this we have in the *Tragedy of Love* [Banks's *Cyrus*], where, Cyrus having stormed in the most violent manner, Cyaxares observes very calmly,

Why, nephew Cyrus, you are moved.

[38] 'Tis in your choice.
Love me, or love me not.
Conquest of Granada[?]

[39] There is not one beauty in this charming speech but hath been borrowed by almost every tragic writer.

[40] Mr. Banks has (I wish I could not say too servilely) imitated this of Grizzle in his *Earl of Essex*:

Where art thou, Essex, etc.

[41] The countess of Nottingham, in the *Earl of Essex*, is apparently acquainted with Dollallolla.

[42] Grizzle was not probably possessed of that glue of which Mr. Banks speaks in his *Cyrus*.

I'll glue my ears to ev'ry word.

When in a pudding, by his mother put,
The bastard, by a tinker, on a stile
Was dropped.—O, good lord Grizzle! can I bear
To see him from a pudding mount the throne?
Or can, oh can, my Huncamunca bear
To take a pudding's offspring to her arms?
GRIZZLE. Oh horror! horror! horror! cease, my queen.
[43]Thy voice, like twenty screech-owls, wracks my brain.
QUEEN. Then rouse thy spirit—we may yet prevent
This hated match.
GRIZZLE. —We will;[44] nor fate itself,
Should it conspire with Thomas Thumb, should cause it.
I'll swim through seas; I'll ride upon the clouds;
I'll dig the earth; I'll blow out ev'ry fire;
I'll rave; I'll rant; I'll rise; I'll rush; I'll roar;
Fierce as the man whom [45]smiling dolphins bore
From the prosaic to poetic shore.
I'll tear the scoundrel into twenty pieces.
QUEEN. Oh, no! prevent the match, but hurt him not;
For, tho' I would not have him have my daughter,
Yet can we kill the man that killed the giants?
GRIZZLE. I tell you, madam, it was all a trick;
He made the giants first, and then he killed them—
As fox-hunters bring foxes to the wood,
And then with hounds they drive them out again.
QUEEN. How! have you seen no giants? Are there not
Now, in the yard, ten thousand proper giants?
GRIZZLE. [46]Indeed I cannot positively tell,
But firmly do believe there is not one.
QUEEN. Hence! from my sight! thou traitor, hie away;
By all my stars! thou enviest Tom Thumb.
Go, sirrah! go,[47] hie away! hie!—thou art
A setting-dog: be gone!
GRIZZLE. Madam, I go.
Tom Thumb shall feel the vengeance you have raised.
So, when two dogs are fighting in the streets,
With a third dog one of the two dogs meets,
With angry teeth he bites him to the bone,
And this dog smarts for what that dog had done.

SCENE VI

QUEEN, *sola*

QUEEN. And whither shall I go?—Alack a day!
I love Tom Thumb—but must not tell him so;
For what's a woman when her virtue's gone?
A coat without its lace; wig out of buckle;

[43]Screech-owls, dark ravens, and amphibious monsters,
Are screaming in that voice. *Mary Queen of Scots*

[44]The reader may see all the beauties of this speech in a late ode, called the *Naval Lyric* [Young's].

[45]This epithet to a dolphin doth not give one so clear an idea as were to be wished; a smiling fish seeming a little more difficult to be imagined than a flying fish. Mr. Dryden is of opinion that smiling is the property of reason, and that no irrational creature can smile:

Smiles not allowed to beasts from reason move.
State of Innocence

[46]These lines are written in the same key with those in the *Earl of Essex*:

Why, sayest thou so? I love thee well, indeed
I do, and thou shalt find by this 'tis true.

Or with this in *Cyrus*:

The most heroic mind that ever was.

And with above half of the modern tragedies.

[47]Aristotle [?], in that excellent work of his which is very justly styled his masterpiece, earnestly recommends using the terms of art, however coarse or even indecent they may be. Mr. Tate is of the same opinion.

BRU. Do not, like young hawks, fetch a course about:
Your game flies fair.

A stocking with a hole in't—I can't live
Without my virtue, or without Tom Thumb.
[48]Then let me weigh them in two equal scales;
In this scale put my virtue, that, Tom Thumb.
—Alas! Tom Thumb is heavier than my virtue.
But hold!—perhaps I may be left a widow:
This match prevented, then Tom Thumb is mine:
In that dear hope I will forget my pain.
So, when some wench to Tothill Bridewell's sent,
With beating hemp and flogging she's content;
She hopes in time to ease her present pain,
At length is free, and walks the streets again.

ACT II

SCENE I. *The street*

Bailiff, Follower

BAILIFF. Come on, my trusty follower, come on;
This day discharge thy duty, and at night
A double mug of beer, and beer shall glad thee.
Stand here by me; this way must Noodle pass.
FOLLOWER. No more, no more, O Bailiff! every word

FRA. Do not fear it.
He answers you in your hawking phrase.
Injured Love

I think these two great authorities are sufficient to justify Dollallolla in the use of the phrase, "Hie away, hie!" when in the same line she says she is speaking to a setting-dog.

[48]We meet with such another pair of scales in Dryden's *King Arthur*:

Arthur and Oswald, and their different fates,
Are weighing now within the scales of Heav'n.

Also in *Sebastian*:

This hour my lot is weighing in the scales.

Inspires my soul with virtue. Oh! I long
To meet the enemy in the street—and nab him:
To lay arresting hands upon his back,
And drag him trembling to the sponging-house.
BAILIFF. There when I have him, I will sponge upon him.
[49]Oh! glorious thought! by the sun, moon, and stars,
I will enjoy it, tho' it be in thought!
Yes, yes, my follower, I will enjoy it.
FOLLOWER. Enjoy it then some other time, for now
Our prey approaches.
BAILIFF. Let us retire.
[*They withdraw slowly*]

SCENE II

TOM THUMB, NOODLE, Bailiff, Follower

THUMB. Trust me, my Noodle, I am wondrous sick;
For, tho' I love the gentle Huncamunca,
Yet at the thought of marriage I grow pale:
For, oh! [50]but swear thou'lt keep it ever secret,
I will unfold a tale will make thee stare.
NOODLE. I swear by lovely Huncamunca's charms.
THUMB. Then know [51]my grandmamma hath often said,

[49]Mr. Rowe is generally imagined to have taken some hints from this scene in his character of Bajazet; but as he, of all the tragic writers, bears the least resemblance to our author in his diction, I am unwilling to imagine he would condescend to copy him in this particular.

[50]This method of surprising an audience, by raising their expectation to the highest pitch, and then balking it, hath been practised with great success by most of our tragical authors.

[51]Almeyda, in *Sebastian*, is in the same distress:

Sometimes methinks I hear the groan of ghosts,
Thin hollow sounds and lamentable screams;
Then, like a dying echo from afar,
My mother's voice that cries, "Wed not, Almeyda";
Forewarned, "Almeyda, marriage is thy crime."

Tom Thumb, beware of marriage.
NOODLE. Sir, I blush
To think a warrior, great in arms as you,
Should be affrighted by his grandmamma.
Can an old woman's empty dreams deter
The blooming hero from the virgin's arms?
Think of the joy that will your soul alarm,
When in her fond embraces clasped you lie,
While on her panting breast, dissolved in bliss,
You pour out all Tom Thumb in every kiss.
THUMB. Oh! Noodle, thou hast fired my eager soul!
Spite of my grandmother she shall be mine;
I'll hug, caress, I'll eat her up with love.
Whole days, and nights, and years shall be too short
For our enjoyment; every sun shall rise
[52]Blushing to see us in our bed together.
NOODLE. Oh, sir! this purpose of your soul pursue.
BAILIFF. Oh! sir! I have an action against you.
NOODLE. At whose suit is it?
BAILIFF. At your tailor's, sir.
Your tailor put this warrant in my hands,
And I arrest you, sir, at his commands.
THUMB. Ha! dogs! Arrest my friend before my face?
Think you Tom Thumb will suffer this disgrace?
But let vain cowards threaten by their word,
Tom Thumb shall show his anger by his sword.
Kills the Bailiff *and his* Follower
BAILIFF. Oh, I am slain!
FOLLOWER. I am murthered also
And to the shades, the dismal shades below,
My bailiff's faithful follower I go.
NOODLE. [53]Go then to hell, like rascals as you are,
And give our service to the bailiffs there.
THUMB. Thus perish all the bailiffs in the land,
Till debtors at noon-day shall walk the streets,
And no one fear a bailiff or his writ.

SCENE III. *The* PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA'S *apartment*

HUNCAMUNCA, CLEORA, MUSTACHA

HUNCAMUNCA. [54]Give me some music—see that it be sad.
CLEORA. (*Sings*)

I

Cupid, ease a love-sick maid,
Bring thy quiver to her aid;
With equal ardor wound the swain,
Beauty should never sigh in vain.

II

Let him feel the pleasing smart,
Drive thy arrow thro' his heart:
When one you wound, you then destroy;
When both you kill, you kill with joy.

HUNCAMUNCA. [55]O Tom Thumb! Tom Thumb! wherefore art thou Tom Thumb?

[52]"As very well he may, if he hath any modesty in him," says Mr. D[enni]s. The author of *Busiris* is extremely zealous to prevent the sun's blushing at any indecent object; and therefore on all such occasions he addresses himself to the sun, and desires him to keep out of the way.

Rise never more, O sun! let night prevail,
Eternal darkness close the world's wide scene.
Busiris

Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning.
Ibid.

Mr. Banks makes the sun perform the office of Hymen, and therefore not likely to be disgusted at such a sight:

The sun sets forth like a gay brideman with you.
Mary Queen of Scots

[53]Nourmahal sends the same message to heaven:

For I would have you when you upwards move,
Speak kindly of us to our friends above.
Aurengzebe

We find another "to hell," in the *Persian Princess*:

Villain, get thee down
To hell, and tell them that the fray's begun.

[54]Anthony gives the same command in the same words.

[55]Oh! Marius, Marius, wherefore art thou Marius? [OTWAY'S] *Marius*

Why hadst thou not been born of royal race?
Why had not mighty Bantam been thy father?
Or else the king of Brentford, Old or New?

MUSTACHA. I am surprised that your Highness can give yourself a moment's uneasiness about that little insignificant fellow,[56] Tom Thumb the Great—one properer for a plaything than a husband. Were he my husband his horns should be as long as his body. If you had fallen in love with a grenadier, I should not have wondered at it. If you had fallen in love with something—but to fall in love with nothing!

HUNCAMUNCA. Cease, my Mustacha! on thy duty cease.
The zephyr, when in flow'ry vales it plays,
Is not so soft, so sweet as Thummy's breath.
The dove is not so gentle to its mate.

MUSTACHA. The dove is every bit as proper for a husband.—Alas! Madam, there's not a beau about the court looks so little like a man. He is a perfect butterfly—a thing without substance, and almost without shadow too.

HUNCAMUNCA. This rudeness is unseasonable: desist!
Or I shall think this railing comes from love.
Tom Thumb's a creature of that charming form,
That no one can abuse, unless they love him.

MUSTACHA. Madam, the king.

SCENE IV

KING, HUNCAMUNCA

KING. Let all but Huncamunca leave the room. *Exeunt* CLEORA *and* MUSTACHA
Daughter, I have observed of late some grief
Unusual in your countenance: your eyes
[57]That, like two open windows, used to show
The lovely beauty of the rooms within,
Have now two blinds before them. What is the cause?
Say, have you not enough of meat and drink?
We've giv'n strict orders not to have you stinted.

HUNCAMUNCA. Alas! my lord, I value not myself
That once I eat two fowls and half a pig;
[58]Small is that praise! but oh! a maid may want
What she can neither eat nor drink.

KING. What's that?

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh,[59] spare my blushes; but I mean a husband.

KING. If that be all, I have provided one—
A husband great in arms, whose warlike sword
Streams with the yellow blood of slaughtered giants,
Whose name in Terra Incognita is known;
Whose valor, wisdom, virtue make a noise
Great as the kettle-drums of twenty armies.

[56]Nothing is more common than these seeming contradictions; such as,

> Haughty weakness. *Victim*
> Great small world.
> [ECCLESTONE'S] *Noah's Flood*

[57]Lee hath improved this metaphor:

> Dost thou not view joy peeping from my eyes,
> The casements opened wide to gaze on thee?
> So Rome's glad citizens to windows rise,
> When they some young triumpher fain would see.
> *Gloriana*

[58]Almahide hath the same contempt for these appetites:

> To eat and drink can no perfection be.
> *Conquest of Granada*

The Earl of Essex is of a different opinion, and seems to place the chief happiness of a general therein:

> Were but commanders half so well rewarded,
> Then they might eat. BANKS'S *Earl of Essex*

But, if we may believe one who knows more than either, the devil himself, we shall find eating to be an affair of more moment than is generally imagined:

> Gods are immortal only by their food.
> Lucifer, in the *State of Innocence*

[59]"This expression is enough of itself," says Mr. D[enni]s, "utterly to destroy the character of Huncamunca!" Yet we find a woman of no abandoned character in Dryden adventuring farther, and thus excusing herself:

HUNCAMUNCA. Whom does my royal father mean?
KING. Tom Thumb.
HUNCAMUNCA. Is it possible?
KING. Ha! the window-blinds are gone;
[60]A country-dance of joy is in your face.
Your eyes spit fire, your cheeks grow red as beef.
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh, there's a magic-music in that sound,
Enough to turn me into beef indeed!
Yes, I will own, since licensed by your word,
I'll own Tom Thumb the cause of all my grief.
For him I've sighed, I've wept, I've gnawed my sheets.
KING. Oh! thou shalt gnaw thy tender sheets no more.
A husband thou shalt have to mumble now.
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! happy sound! henceforth let no one tell
That Huncamunca shall lead apes in hell.
Oh! I am overjoyed!
KING. I see thou art.
[61]Joy lightens in thy eyes, and thunders from thy brows;
Transports, like lightning, dart along thy soul,

To speak our wishes first, forbid it, Pride,
Forbid it, Modesty; true, they forbid it,
But Nature does not. When we are athirst,
Or hungry, will imperious Nature stay,
Nor eat, nor drink, before 'tis bid fall on?
Cleomenes

Cassandra speaks before she is asked: Huncamunca afterwards. Cassandra speaks her wishes to her lover: Huncamunca only to her father.

[60]Her eyes resistless magic bear;
Angels, I see, and gods are dancing there.
LEE'S *Sophonisba*

[61]Mr. Dennis, in that excellent tragedy called *Liberty Asserted*, which is thought to have given so great a stroke to the late French king, hath frequent imitations of this beautiful speech of King Arthur:

Conquest light'ning in his eyes, and thundering in his arm.
Joy lighten'd in her eyes.
Joys like lightning dart along my soul.

As small-shot thro' a hedge.
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! say not small.
KING. This happy news shall on our tongue ride post,
Ourself we bear the happy news to Thumb.
Yet think not, daughter, that your powerful charms
Must still detain the hero from his arms;
Various his duty, various his delight;
Now is his turn to kiss, and now to fight,
And now to kiss again. So, mighty[62] Jove,
When with excessive thund'ring tired above,
Comes down to earth, and takes a bit—and then
Flies to his trade of thundering back again.
[*Exit* KING]

SCENE V

GRIZZLE, HUNCAMUNCA

[63]GRIZZLE. Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
Thy pouting breasts, like kettle-drums of brass,
Beat everlasting loud alarms of joy;
As bright as brass they are, and oh, as hard.
Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
HUNCAMUNCA. Ha! dost thou know me, princess as I am,
[64]That thus of me you dare to make your game?

[62]Jove, with excessive thund'ring tired above,
Comes down for ease, enjoys a nymph, and then
Mounts dreadful, and to thundering goes again.
Gloriana

[63]This beautiful line, which ought, says Mr. W[arburton?], to be written in gold, is imitated in the *New Sophonisba*:

Oh! Sophonisba; Sophonisba, oh!
Oh! Narva; Narva, oh!

The author of a song called *Duke upon Duke* hath improved it:

Alas! O Nick! O Nick, alas!

Where, by the help of a little false spelling, you have two meanings in the repeated words.

[64]Edith, in the *Bloody Brother*, speaks to her lover in the same familiar language:

Your grace is full of game.

GRIZZLE. Oh! Huncamunca, well I know that you
A princess are, and a king's daughter, too;
But love no meanness scorns, no grandeur fears;
Love often lords into the cellar bears,
And bids the sturdy porter come upstairs.
For what's too high for love, or what's too low?
Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!

HUNCAMUNCA. But, granting all you say of love were true,
My love, alas! is to another due.
In vain to me a suitoring you come,
For I'm already promised to Tom Thumb.

GRIZZLE. And can my princess such a durgen wed?
One fitter for your pocket than your bed?
Advised by me, the worthless baby shun,
Or you will ne'er be brought to bed of one.
Oh, take me to thy arms, and never flinch,
Who am a man, by Jupiter! ev'ry inch.
[65]Then, while in joys together lost we lie,
I'll press thy soul while gods stand wishing by.

HUNCAMUNCA. If, sir, what you insinuate you prove,
All obstacles of promise you remove;
For all engagements to a man must fall,
Whene'er that man is proved no man at all.

GRIZZLE. Oh! let him seek some dwarf, some fairy miss,
Where no joint-stool must lift him to the kiss!
But, by the stars and glory! you appear
Much fitter for a Prussian grenadier;
One globe alone on Atlas' shoulders rests,
Two globes are less than Huncamunca's breasts;
The milky way is not so white, that's flat,
And sure thy breasts are full as large as that.

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh, sir, so strong your eloquence I find,
It is impossible to be unkind.

GRIZZLE. Ah! speak that o'er again; and let the[66] sound
From one pole to another pole rebound;
The earth and sky each be a battledore,
And keep the sound, that shuttlecock, up an hour:
To Doctors-Commons for a license I
Swift as an arrow from a bow will fly.

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh, no! lest some disaster we should meet,
'Twere better to be married at the Fleet.

GRIZZLE. Forbid it, all ye powers, a princess should
By that vile place contaminate her blood!
My quick return shall to my charmer prove
I travel on the [67]post-horses of love.

HUNCAMUNCA. Those post-horses to me will seem too slow
Though they should fly swift as the gods, when they
Ride on behind that post-boy, Opportunity.

[*Exit* GRIZZLE]

SCENE VI

TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA

THUMB. Where is my princess? where's my Huncamunca?
Where are those eyes, those cardmatches of love,
That [68]light up all with love my waxen soul?

[65]Traverse the glitt'ring chambers of the sky,
Borne on a cloud in view of fate I'll lie,
And press her soul while gods stand wishing by.
[Lee's] *Hannibal*

[66]Let the four winds from distant corners meet,
And on their wings first bear it into France;
Then back again to Edina's proud walls,
Till victim to the sound th'aspiring city falls.
Albion Queens

[67]I do not remember any metaphors so frequent in the tragic poets as those borrowed from riding post:

The gods and opportunity ride post.
Hannibal

——Let's rush together,
For death rides post.
Duke of Guise

Destruction gallops to thy murther post.
Gloriana

[68]This image, too, very often occurs:

——Bright as when thy eye
First lighted up our loves. *Aurengzebe*

Where is that face which artful nature made
[69]In the same moulds where Venus' self was cast?
HUNCAMUNCA. [70]Oh! what is music to the ear that's deaf,

'Tis not a crown alone lights up my name.
Busiris

[69]There is great dissension among the poets concerning the method of making man. One tells his mistress that the mould she was made in, being lost, Heaven cannot form such another. Lucifer, in Dryden, gives a merry description of his own formation:

Whom Heaven, neglecting, made and scarce designed,
But threw me in for number to the rest.
State of Innocence

In one place the same poet supposes man to be made of metal:

I was formed
Of that coarse metal which, when she was made,
The gods threw by for rubbish. *All for Love*

In another of dough:

When the gods moulded up the paste of man,
Some of their clay was left upon their hands,
And so they made Egyptians. *Cleomenes*

In another of clay:

——Rubbish of remaining clay. *Sebastian*

One makes the soul of wax:

Her waxen soul begins to melt apace.
Anna Bullen

Another of flint:

Sure our two souls have somewhere been acquainted.
In former beings, or, struck out together;
One spark to Afric flew, and one to Portugal.
Sebastian

To omit the great quantities of iron, brazen, and leaden souls which are so plenty in modern authors—I cannot omit the dress of a soul as we find it in Dryden:

Souls shirted but with air. *King Arthur*

Nor can I pass by a particular sort of soul in a particular sort of description in the *New Sophonisba*:

Ye mysterious powers,
——Whether thro' your gloomy depths I wander,
Or on the mountains walk, give me the calm,
The steady smiling soul, where wisdom sheds
Eternal sunshine, and eternal joy.

[70]This line Mr. Banks has plundered entire in his *Anna Bullen*.

Or a goose-pie to him that has no taste?
What are these praises now to me, since I
Am promised to another?
THUMB. Ha! promised!
HUNCAMUNCA. Too sure; 'tis written in the book of fate.
THUMB. [71]Then I will tear away the leaf
Wherein it's writ; or, if fate won't allow
So large a gap within its journal-book,
I'll blot it out at least.

SCENE VII

GLUMDALCA, TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA

GLUMDALCA. [72]I need not ask if you are Huncamunca,
Your brandy-nose proclaims—
HUNCAMUNCA. I am a princess;
Nor need I ask who you are.
GLUMDALCA. A giantess;
The queen of those who made and unmade queens.
HUNCAMUNCA. The man whose chief ambition is to be
My sweetheart, hath destroyed these mighty giants.
GLUMDALCA. Your sweetheart? Dost thou think the man who once
Hath worn my easy chains will e'er wear thine?
HUNCAMUNCA. Well may your chains be easy, since, if Fame
Says true, they have been tried on twenty husbands.

[71]Good Heaven! the book of fate before me lay,
But to tear out the journal of that day.
Or, if the order of the world below
Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
Give me that minute when she made her vow.
Conquest of Granada

[72]I know some of the commentators have imagined that Mr. Dryden, in the altercative scene between Cleopatra and Octavia, a scene which Mr. Addison inveighs against with great bitterness, is much beholden to our author. How just this their observation is I will not presume to determine.

[73]The glove or boot, so many times pulled on,
May well sit easy on the hand or foot.
GLUMDALCA. I glory in the number, and when I
Sit poorly down, like thee, content with one,
Heaven change this face for one as bad as thine.
HUNCAMUNCA. Let me see nearer what this beauty is
That captivates the heart of men by scores.
(*Holds a candle to her face*)
Oh! Heaven, thou art as ugly as the devil.
GLUMDALCA. You'd give the best of shoes within your shop
To be but half so handsome.
HUNCAMUNCA. Since you come
[74]To that, I'll put my beauty to the test:
Tom Thumb, I'm yours, if you with me will go.
GLUMDALCA. Oh! stay, Tom Thumb, and you alone shall fill
That bed where twenty giants used to lie.
THUMB. In the balcony that o'erhangs the stage,
I've seen a whore two 'prentices engage;
One, half-a-crown does in his fingers hold,
The other shows a little piece of gold;
She the half-guinea wisely does purloin,
And leaves the larger and the baser coin.
[*Exeunt* TOM THUMB *and the* Princess]

GLUMDALCA. Left, scorned, and loathed for such a chit as this;
[75]I feel the storm that's rising in my mind,
Tempests and whirlwinds rise, and roll, and roar.
I'm all within a hurricane, as if
[76]The world's four winds were pent within my carcass.
[77]Confusion, horror, murder, guts, and death!

SCENE VIII

KING, GLUMDALCA

KING. [78]Sure never was so sad a king as I!
[79]My life is worn as ragged as a coat
A beggar wears; a prince should put it off.
[80]To love a captive and a giantess!
Oh, love! oh, love! how great a king art thou!
My tongue's thy trumpet, and thou trumpetest,
Unknown to me, within me. [81]O Glumdalca!
Heaven thee designed a giantess to make,
But an angelic soul was shuffled in.
[82]I am a multitude of walking griefs,

[73]"A cobbling poet indeed," says Mr. D.; and yet I believe we may find as monstrous images in the tragic authors: I'll put down one:

> Untie your folded thoughts, and let them dangle loose as a bride's hair. *Injured Love*

Which line seems to have as much title to a milliner's shop as our author's to a shoemaker's.

[74]Mr. L[ee] takes occasion in this place to commend the great care of our author to preserve the metre of blank verse, in which Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher were so notoriously negligent; and the moderns, in imitation of our author, so laudably observant:

> Then does
> Your majesty believe that he can be
> A traitor? *Earl of Essex*

Every page of *Sophonisba* gives us instances of this excellence.

[75]Love mounts and rolls about my stormy mind. *Aurengzebe*

Tempests and whirlwinds thro' my bosom move. *Cleomenes*

[76]With such a furious tempest on his brow,
As if the world's four winds were pent within
His blustering carcass. *Anna Bullen*

[77]Verba Tragica.

[78]This speech has been terribly mauled by the poet.

> [79]——My life is worn to rags,
> Not worth a prince's wearing.
> *Love Triumphant*

[80]Must I beg the pity of my slave?
Must a king beg? But love's a greater king,
A tyrant, nay, a devil, that possesses me.
He tunes the organ of my voice and speaks,
Unknown to me, within me. *Sebastian*

[81]When thou wert formed, Heaven did a man begin;
But a brute soul by chance was shuffled in. *Aurengzebe*

> [82]I am a multitude
> Of walking griefs.
> *New Sophonisba*

And only on her lips the balm is found
[83]To spread a plaster that might cure them all.
GLUMDALCA. What do I hear?
KING. What do I see?
GLUMDALCA. Oh!
KING. Ah!
[84]GLUMDALCA. Ah! wretched queen!
KING. Oh! wretched king!
[35]GLUMDALCA. Ah!
KING. Oh!
[*Exeunt*]

SCENE IX

TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA, PARSON

PARSON. Happy's the wooing that's not long a doing;
For, if I guess right, Tom Thumb this night
Shall give a being to a new Tom Thumb.
THUMB. It shall be my endeavor so to do.
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! fie upon you, sir; you make me blush.
THUMB. It is the virgin's sign, and suits you well:

[83]I will take thy scorpion blood,
And lay it to my grief till I have ease.
Anna Bullen

[84]Our author, who everywhere shows his great penetration into human nature, here outdoes himself: where a less judicious poet would have raised a long scene of whining love, he, who understood the passions better, and that so violent an affection as this must be too big for utterance, chooses rather to send his characters off in this sullen and doleful manner, in which admirable conduct he is imitated by the author of the justly celebrated *Eurydice*. Dr. Young seems to point at this violence of passion:

——Passion chokes
Their words, and they're the statues of despair.

And Seneca tells us, *Curae leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent*. The story of the Egyptian king in Herodotus is too well known to need to be inserted; I refer the more curious reader to the excellent Montaigne, who hath written an essay on this subject.

[85]To part is death.
'Tis death to part.
Ah!
Oh!
Don Carlos

[86]I know not where, nor how, nor what I am;
[87]I'm so transported, I have lost myself.
HUNCAMUNCA. Forbid it, all ye stars, for you're so small,
That were you lost, you'd find yourself no more.
So the unhappy sempstress once, they say,
Her needle in a pottle, lost, of hay;
In vain she looked, and looked, and made her moan,
For ah, the needle was forever gone.
PARSON. Long may they live, and love, and propagate,
Till the whole land be peopled with Tom Thumbs!

[86]Nor know I whether
What am I, who, or where.
Busiris

I was I know not what, and am I know not how.
Gloriana

[87]To understand sufficiently the beauty of this passage, it will be necessary that we comprehend every man to contain two selfs. I shall not attempt to prove this from philosophy, which the poets make so plainly evident.

One runs away from the other:

——Let me demand, your majesty,
Why fly you from yourself?
Duke of Guise

In a second, one self is a guardian to the other:

Leave me the care of me.
Conquest of Granada

Again:

Myself am to myself less near.
Ibid.

In the same, the first self is proud of the second:

I myself am proud of me.
State of Innocence

In a third, distrustful of him:

Fain I would tell, but whisper it in my ear,
That none besides might hear—nay, not myself.
Earl of Essex

In a fourth, honors him:

I honor Rome,
And honor too myself.
Sophonisba

In a fifth, at variance with him:

Leave me not thus at variance with myself.
Busiris

[88]So, when the Cheshire cheese a maggot breeds,
Another and another still succeeds:
By thousands and ten thousands they increase,
Till one continued maggot fills the rotten cheese. [*Exeunt*]

Scene X

Noodle, *and then* Grizzle

Noodle. [89]Sure, Nature means to break her solid chain,
Or else unfix the world, and in a rage
To hurl it from its axletree and hinges;
All things are so confused! the king's in love,
The queen is drunk, the princess married is.
Grizzle. Oh, Noodle! Hast thou Huncamunca seen?
Noodle. I've seen a thousand sights this day, where none
Are by the wonderful bitch herself outdone.
The king, the queen, and all the court, are sights.
Grizzle. [90]D—n your delay, you trifler! are you drunk, ha?
I will not hear one word but Huncamunca.
Noodle. By this time she is married to Tom Thumb.
Grizzle. [91]My Huncamunca?
Noodle. Your Huncamunca,
Tom Thumb's Huncamunca, every man's Huncamunca.
Grizzle. If this be true, all womankind are damned.
Noodle. If it be not, may I be so myself. [*Exit*]
Grizzle. See where she comes! I'll not believe a word
Against that face, upon whose [92]ample brow
Sits innocence with majesty enthroned.

Grizzle, Huncamunca

Grizzle. Where has my Huncamunca been? See here—
The license in my hand!
Huncamunca. Alas! Tom Thumb.
Grizzle. Why dost thou mention him?
Huncamunca. Ah, me! Tom Thumb.
Grizzle. What means my lovely Huncamunca?
Huncamunca. Hum!
Grizzle. Oh! speak.
Huncamunca. Hum!
Grizzle. Ha! your every word is hum:
[93]You force me still to answer you, Tom Thumb.
Tom Thumb—I'm on the rack—I'm in a flame.

Again, in a sixth:

> I find myself divided from myself.
> [Johnson's] *Medea*

She seemed the sad effigies of herself. Banks

> Assist me, Zulema, if thou wouldst be
> The friend thou seemest, assist me against me.
> *Albion Queens*

From all which it appears that there are two selfs; and therefore Tom Thumb's losing himself is no such solecism as it hath been represented by men rather ambitious of criticising than qualified to criticise.

[88]Mr. F[ielding] imagines this parson to have been a Welsh one, from his simile.

[89]Our author hath been plundered here, according to custom:

Great Nature, break thy chain that links together
The fabric of the world, and make a chaos
Like that within my soul. *Love Triumphant*

> ——Startle Nature, unfix the globe,
> And hurl it from its axletree and hinges.
> *Albion Queens*

The tott'ring earth seems sliding off its props.

[90]D—n your delay, ye torturers, proceed;
I will not hear one word but Almahide.
Conquest of Granada

[91]Mr. Dryden hath imitated this in *All for Love.*

[92]This Miltonic style abounds in the *New Sophonisba*:

> ——And on her ample brow
> Sat majesty.

[93]Your ev'ry answer still so ends in that,
You force me still to answer you Morat.
Aurengzebe

[94]Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb—
you love the name;
So pleasing is that sound that, were you
dumb,
You still would find a voice to cry, Tom
Thumb!
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! be not hasty to pro-
claim my doom!
My ample heart for more than one has
room:
A maid like me Heaven formed at least for
two;
[95]I married him, and now I'll marry you.
GRIZZLE. Ha! dost thou own thy false-
hood to my face?
Think'st thou that I will share thy husband's
place?
Since to that office one cannot suffice,
And since you scorn to dine one single dish
on,
Go, get your husband put into commission.
Commissioners to discharge, (ye gods!) it
fine is,
The duty of a husband to your highness.
Yet think not long I will my rival bear,
Or unrevenged the slighted willow wear;
The gloomy, brooding tempest, now confined
Within the hollow caverns of my mind,
In dreadful whirl shall roll along the coasts,
Shall thin the land of all the men it boasts,
[96]And cram up ev'ry chink of hell with
ghosts.

[94]Morat, Morat, Morat! you love the name.
Ibid

[95]"Here is a sentiment for the virtuous Huncamunca!" says Mr. D[enni]s. And yet, with the leave of this great man, the virtuous Panthea, in *Cyrus*, hath an heart every whit as ample:

For two I must confess are gods to me,
Which is my Abradatus first, and thee.
Cyrus the Great

Nor is the lady in *Love Triumphant* more reserved, though not so intelligible:

I am so divided,
That I grieve most for both, and love both most.

[96]A ridiculous supposition to anyone who considers the great and extensive largeness of hell, says a commentator; but not so to those who consider the great expansion of immaterial substance. Mr. Banks makes one soul to be so expanded, that heaven could not contain it:

The heavens are all too narrow for her soul.
Virtue Betrayed

The *Persian Princess* hath a passage not unlike the author of this:

We will send such shoals of murthered slaves,
Shall glut hell's empty regions.

This threatens to fill hell, even tho' it were empty: Lord Grizzle, only to fill up the chinks, supposing the rest already full.

[97]So have I seen, in some dark winter's day,
A sudden storm rush down the sky's highway,
Sweep thro' the streets with terrible ding-
dong,
Gush thro' the spouts, and wash whole
crowds along.
The crowded shops the thronging vermin
screen,
Together cram the dirty and the clean,
And not one shoe-boy in the street is seen.
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh, fatal rashness! should
his fury slay
My hapless bridegroom on his wedding-day,
I, who this morn of two chose which to wed,
May go again this night alone to bed.
[98]So have I seen some wild unsettled fool,
Who had her choice of this and that joint-
stool,
To give the preference to either loath,
And fondly coveting to sit on both,
While the two stools her sitting-part con-
found,
Between 'em both fall squat upon the ground.
[*Exeunt*]

[97]Mr. Addison is generally thought to have had this simile in his eye when he wrote that beautiful one at the end of the third act of his *Cato*.

[98]This beautiful simile is founded on a proverb which does honor to the English language:

Between two stools the breech falls to the ground.

I am not so well pleased with any written remains of the ancients as with those little aphorisms which verbal tradition hath delivered down to us under the title of proverbs. It were to be wished that, instead of filling their

ACT III

Scene I. King Arthur's *Palace*

Ghost, *solus*

[99] Ghost. Hail! ye black horrors of midnight's midnoon!
Ye fairies, goblins, bats, and screech-owls, hail!
And, oh! ye mortal watchmen, whose hoarse throats
Th'immortal ghosts' dread croakings counterfeit,
All hail!—Ye dancing phantoms, who, by day,
Are some condemned to fast, some feast in fire,
Now play in churchyards, skipping o'er the graves,
To the [100] loud music of the silent bell,
All hail!

Scene II

King *and* Ghost

King. What noise is this? What villain dares,
At this dread hour, with feet and voice profane,
Disturb our royal walls?
Ghost. One who defies
Thy empty power to hurt him; [101] one who dares
Walk in thy bedchamber.
King. Presumptuous slave!
Thou diest.
Ghost. Threaten others with that word:
[102] I am a ghost, and am already dead.
King. Ye stars! 'tis well. Were thy last hour to come,

Te premet nox, fabulaeque manes.
Horace

Of all the ghosts that have ever appeared on the stage, a very learned and judicious foreign critic gives the preference to this of our author. These are his words, speaking of this tragedy:—"Nec quidquam in illâ admirabilius quàm phasma quoddam horrendum, quod omnibus aliis spectris, quibuscum scatet Angelorum tragoedia, longè (pace D—ysii V. Doctiss. dixerim) praetulerim."[1]

[100] We have already given instances of this figure.

[101] Almanzor reasons in the same manner:

A ghost I'll be
And from a ghost, you know, no place is free
Conquest of Granada

[102] "The man who writ this wretched pun," says Mr. D[ennis], "would have picked your pocket": which he proceeds to show not only bad in itself, but doubly so on so solemn an occasion. And yet, in that excellent play of *Liberty Asserted*, we find something very much resembling a pun in the mouth of a mistress who is parting with the lover she is fond of:

pages with the fabulous theology of the pagans, our modern poets would think it worth their while to enrich their works with the proverbial sayings of their ancestors. Mr. Dryden hath chronicled one in heroic:

Two ifs scarce make one possibility.
Conquest of Granada

My Lord Bacon is of opinion that, whatever is known of arts and sciences might be proved to have lurked in the Proverbs of Solomon. I am of the same opinion in relation to those above mentioned; at least I am confident that a more perfect system of ethics, as well as economy, might be compiled out of them than is at present extant, either in the works of the ancient philosophers, or those more valuable, as more voluminous, ones of the modern divines.

[99] Of all the particulars in which the modern stage falls short of the ancient, there is none so much to be lamented as the great scarcity of ghosts in the latter. Whence this proceeds I will not presume to determine. Some are of opinion that the moderns are unequal to that sublime language which a ghost ought to speak. One says, ludicrously, that ghosts are out of fashion; another that they are properer for comedy, forgetting, I suppose, that Aristotle hath told us that a ghost is the soul of tragedy; for so I render the ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος τῆς τραγωδίας which M. Dacier, amongst others, hath mistaken—I suppose misled by not understanding the Fabula of the Latins, which signifies a ghost as well as a fable.

[1] Nor is anything in that more admirable than a certain horrifying ghost, which I should put before all other specters in which English tragedy abounds (I should say with leave of the most learned man Dennis [?]).

This moment had been it; [103]yet by thy shroud
I'll pull thee backward, squeeze thee to a bladder,
Till thou dost groan thy nothingness away.
Thou flyest! 'Tis well. (Ghost *retires*)
[104]I thought what was the courage of a ghost!
Yet, dare not, on thy life—Why say I that,
Since life thou hast not?—Dare not walk again
Within these walls, on pain of the Red Sea.
For, if henceforth I ever find thee here,
As sure, sure as a gun, I'll have thee laid—
GHOST. Were the Red Sea a sea of Holland's gin,
The liquor (when alive) whose very smell
I did detest, did loathe—yet, for the sake
Of Thomas Thumb, I would be laid therein.
KING. Ha! said you?
GHOST. Yes, my liege, I said Tom Thumb,
Whose father's ghost I am—once not unknown
To mighty Arthur. But, I see, 'tis true,
The dearest friend, when dead, we all forget.
KING. 'Tis he—it is the honest Gaffer Thumb.
Oh! let me press thee in my eager arms,
Thou best of ghosts! thou something more than ghost!
GHOST. Would I were something more, that we again
Might feel each other in the warm embrace.

UL. Oh, mortal woe! one kiss, and then farewell.
IRENE. The gods have given to others to fare well.
O! miserably must Irene fare.

Agamemnon, in the *Victim*, is full as facetious on the most solemn occasion—that of sacrificing his daughter:

Yes, daughter, yes; you will assist the priest;
Yes, you must offer up your—vows for Greece.

[103]I'll pull thee backwards by thy shroud to light,
Or else I'll squeeze thee, like a bladder, there,
And make thee groan thyself away to air.
Conquest of Granada

Snatch me, ye gods, this moment into nothing.
Cyrus the Great

[104]So, art thou gone? Thou canst no conquest boast.
I thought what was the courage of a ghost.
Conquest of Granada

But now I have the advantage of my king,
[105]For I feel thee, whilst thou dost not feel me.
KING. But say, [106]thou dearest air, oh! say what dread,
Important business sends thee back to earth?
GHOST. Oh! then prepare to hear—which but to hear
Is full enough to send thy spirit hence.
Thy subjects up in arms, by Grizzle led,
Will, ere the rosy-fingered morn shall ope
The shutters of the sky, before the gate
Of this thy royal palace, swarming spread.
[107]So have I seen the bees in clusters swarm,
So have I seen the stars in frosty nights,
So have I seen the sand in windy days,
So have I seen the ghosts on Pluto's shore,
So have I seen the flowers in spring arise,
So have I seen the leaves in autumn fall,
So have I seen the fruits in summer smile,
So have I seen the snow in winter frown.
KING. D—n all thou'st seen! dost thou, beneath the shape
Of Gaffer Thumb, come hither to abuse me
With similes, to keep me on the rack?
Hence—or, by all the torments of thy hell,
[108]I'll run thee thro' the body, though thou'st none.
GHOST. Arthur, beware! I must this moment hence,

King Arthur seems to be as brave a fellow as Almanzor, who says most heroically,

In spite of ghosts I'll on.

[105]The ghost of Lausaria, in *Cyrus*, is a plain copy of this, and is therefore worth reading:

Ah, Cyrus!
Thou mayest as well grasp water, or fleet air,
As think of touching my immortal shade.
Cyrus the Great

[106]Thou better part of heavenly air.
Conquest of Granada

[107]"A string of similes," says one, "proper to be hung up in the cabinet of a prince."

[108]This passage hath been understood several different ways by the commentators. For my part, I find it difficult to understand it at all. Mr. Dryden says—

I've heard something how two bodies meet,
But how two souls join I know not.

Not frighted by your voice, but by the cocks!
Arthur beware, beware, beware, beware!
Strive to avert thy yet impending fate;
For, if thou'rt killed to-day,
To-morrow all thy care will come too late.
[*Exit*]

Scene III

KING, *solus*

KING. Oh! stay, and leave me not uncertain thus!
And, whilst thou tellest me what's like my fate,
Oh! teach me how I may avert it too!
Cursed be the man who first a simile made!
Cursed ev'ry bard who writes!—So have I seen
Those whose comparisons are just and true,
And those who liken things not like at all.
The devil is happy that the whole creation
Can furnish out no simile to his fortune.

Scene IV

KING, QUEEN

QUEEN. What is the cause, my Arthur, that you steal
Thus silently from Dollallolla's breast?
Why dost thou leave me in the [109]dark alone,
When well thou knowest I am afraid of sprites?
KING. Oh, Dollallolla! do not blame my love!
I hoped the fumes of last night's punch had laid
Thy lovely eyelids fast.—But, oh! I find
There is no power in drams to quiet wives;
Each morn, as the returning sun, they wake,
And shine upon their husbands.

QUEEN. Think, oh think!
What a surprise it must be to the sun,
Rising, to find the vanished world away.
What less can be the wretched wife's surprise
When, stretching out her arms to fold thee fast,
She folds her useless bolster in her arms.
[110]Think, think, on that.—Oh! think, think well on that!
I do remember also to have read
[111]In Dryden's Ovid's Metamorphoses,
That Jove in form inanimate did lie
With beauteous Danaë: and, trust me, love,
[112]I feared the bolster might have been a Jove.
KING. Come to my arms, most virtuous of thy sex;
Oh, Dollallolla! were all wives like thee,
So many husbands never had worn horns.
Should Huncamunca of thy worth partake,
Tom Thumb indeed were blest.—Oh, fatal name!
For didst thou know one quarter what I know,
Then wouldst thou know—Alas! what thou wouldst know!
QUEEN. What can I gather hence? Why dost thou speak
Like men who carry rareeshows about?
"Now you shall see, gentlemen, what you shall see."
Oh, tell me more, or thou hast told too much.

Scene V

KING, QUEEN, NOODLE

NOODLE. Long life attend your majesties serene,
Great Arthur, King, and Dollallolla, queen!
Lord Grizzle, with a bold rebellious crowd,

So that, till the body of a spirit be better understood, it will be difficult to understand how it is possible to run him through it.

[109]Cydaria is of the same fearful temper with Dollallolla:

> I never durst in darkness be alone.
>
> [DRYDEN'S] *Indian Emperor*

[110]Think well of this, think that, think every way.
Sophonisba

[111]These quotations are more usual in the comic than in the tragic writers. [Not in Dryden. H.]

[112]"This distress," says Mr. D[ennis], "I must allow to be extremely beautiful, and tends to heighten the virtuous character of Dollal-

Advances to the palace, threat'ning loud,
Unless the princess be delivered straight,
And the victorious Thumb, without his pate,
They are resolved to batter down the gate.

Scene VI

King, Queen, Huncamunca, Noodle

King. See where the princess comes! Where is Tom Thumb?

Huncamunca. Oh! sir, about an hour and half ago
He sallied out to encounter with the foe,
And swore, unless his fate had him misled,
From Grizzle's shoulders to cut off his head,
And serve't up with your chocolate in bed.

King. 'Tis well; I find one devil told us both.
Come, Dollallolla, Huncamunca, come;
Within we'll wait for the victorious Thumb:
In peace and safety we secure may stay,
While to his arm we trust the bloody fray;
Though men and giants should conspire with gods,
[113]He is alone equal to all these odds.

Queen. He is, indeed, [114]a helmet to us all:
While he supports we need not fear to fall;
His arm dispatches all things to our wish,
And serves up every foe's head in a dish.
Void is the mistress of the house of care,
While the good cook presents the bill of fare;
Whether the cod, that northern king of fish,
Or duck, or goose, or pig, adorn the dish,
No fears the number of her guests afford,
But at her hour she sees the dinner on the board. [*Exeunt*]

Scene VII. *A plain*

Grizzle, Foodle, *and* Rebels

Grizzle. Thus far our arms with victory are crowned;
For, though we have not fought, yet we have found
[115]No enemy to fight withal.

Foodle. Yet I,
Methinks, would willingly avoid this day,

lolla, who is so exceeding delicate that she is in the highest apprehension from the inanimate embrace of a bolster. An example worthy of imitation for all our writers of tragedy."

[113]Credat Judaeus Appella,
Non ego,

says Mr. D—. "For, passing over the absurdity of being equal to odds, can we possibly suppose a little insignificant fellow—I say again, a little insignificant fellow—able to vie with a strength which all the Samsons and Herculeses of antiquity would be unable to encounter?"

I shall refer this incredulous critic to Mr. Dryden's defence of his Almanzor; and, lest that should not satisfy him, I shall quote a few lines from the speech of a much braver fellow than Almanzor, Mr. Johnson's *Achilles*:

Though human race rise in embattled hosts,
To force her from my arms—Oh! son of Atreus!
By that immortal power, whose deathless spirit
Informs this earth, I will oppose them all.
Victim

[114]"I have heard of being supported by a staff," says Mr. D., "but never of being supported by an helmet." I believe he never heard of sailing with wings, which he may read in no less a poet than Mr. Dryden:

Unless we borrow wings, and sail thro' air.
Love Triumphant

What will he say to a kneeling valley?

——I'll stand
Like a safe valley, that low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain. *Injured Love*

I am ashamed of so ignorant a carper, who doth not know that an epithet in tragedy is very often no other than an expletive. Do not we read in the *New Sophonisba* of "grinding chains, blue plagues, white occasions, and blue serenity"? Nay, it is not the adjective only, but sometimes half a sentence is put by way of expletive, as, "Beauty pointed high with spirit," in the same play; and, "In the lap of blessing, to be most curst," in the *Revenge*.

[115]A victory like that of Almanzor:

Almanzor is victorious without fight.
Conquest of Granada

[116]This first of April, to engage our foes.
GRIZZLE. This day, of all the days of the year, I'd choose,
For on this day my grandmother was born.
Gods! I will make Tom Thumb an April-fool;
[117]Will teach his wit an errand it ne'er knew,
And send it post to the Elysian shades.
FOODLE. I'm glad to find our army is so stout,
Nor does it move my wonder less than joy.
GRIZZLE. [118]What friends we have, and how we came so strong,
I'll softly tell you as we march along.

SCENE VIII

Thunder and lightning.—TOM THUMB, GLUMDALCA, *cum suis*

THUMB. Oh, Noodle! hast thou seen a day like this?
[119]The unborn thunder rumbles o'er our heads,
[120]As if the gods meant to unhinge the world;
And heaven and earth in wild confusion hurl;
Yet will I boldly tread the tottering ball.
MERLIN. [*Entering*] Tom Thumb!
THUMB. What voice is this I hear?
MERLIN. Tom Thumb!
THUMB. Again it calls.
MERLIN. Tom Thumb!
GLUMDALCA. It calls again.
THUMB. Appear, whoe'er thou art; I fear thee not.
MERLIN. Thou hast no cause to fear; I am thy friend,
Merlin by name, a conjurer by trade,
And to my art thou dost thy being owe.
THUMB. How!
MERLIN. Hear then the mystic getting of Tom Thumb.

[121]His father was a ploughman plain,
His mother milked the cow;
And yet the way to get a son
This couple knew not how.
Until such time the good old man
To learned Merlin goes,
And there to him, in great distress,
In secret manner shows;
How in his heart he wished to have
A child, in time to come,
To be his heir, though it may be
No bigger than his thumb:
Of which old Merlin was foretold
That he his wish should have;
And so a son of stature small
The charmer to him gave.

Thou'st heard the past, look up and see the future.
THUMB. [122]Lost in amazement's gulf my senses sink;
See there, Glumdalca, see another[123] me!
GLUMDALCA. O, sight of horror! see, you are devoured
By the expanded jaws of a red cow.
MERLIN. Let not these sights deter thy noble mind,
[124]For, lo! a sight more glorious courts thy eyes.

---

[116]Well have we chose an happy day for fight;
For every man, in course of time, has found
Some days are lucky, some unfortunate.
King Arthur

[117]We read of such another in Lee:

Teach his rude wit a flight she never made,
And send her post to the Elysian shade.
Gloriana

[118]These lines are copied verbatim in the *Indian Emperor*.

[119]Unborn thunder rolling in a cloud.
Conquest of Granada

[120]Were heaven and earth in wild confusion hurled,
Should the rash gods unhinge the rolling world,
Undaunted would I tread the tott'ring ball,
Crushed, but unconquered, in the dreadful fall.
[HOPKINS'S] *Female Warrior*

[121]See the *History of Tom Thumb*, page 2.

[122]Amazement swallows up my sense,
And in the impetuous whirl of circling fate
Drinks down my reason. *Persian Princess*

[123]I have outfaced myself.
What! am I two? Is there another me?
King Arthur

[124]The character of Merlin is wonderful throughout, but most so in this prophetic part. We find several of these prophecies in the tragic authors, who frequently take this opportunity

See from afar a theatre arise;
There ages, yet unborn, shall tribute pay
To the heroic actions of this day;
Then buskin tragedy at length shall choose
Thy name, the best supporter of her muse.
THUMB. Enough: let every warlike music sound.
We fall contented if we fall renown'd.

SCENE IX

LORD GRIZZLE, FOODLE, Rebels, *on one side;* TOM THUMB, GLUMDALCA, *on the other*

FOODLE. At length the enemy advances nigh;
[125]I hear them with my ear, and see them with my eye.
GRIZZLE. Draw all your swords: for liberty we fight,
[126]And liberty the mustard is of life.
THUMB. Are you the man whom men famed Grizzle name?
GRIZZLE. [127]Are you the much more famed Tom Thumb?
THUMB. The same.
GRIZZLE. Come on; our worth upon ourselves we'll prove;
For liberty I fight.
THUMB. And I for love.
(*A bloody engagement between the two armies here; drums beating, trumpets sounding, thunder and lightning. They fight off and on several times. Some fall.* GRIZZLE *and* GLUMDALCA *remain*)
GLUMDALCA. Turn, coward, turn; nor from a woman fly.
GRIZZLE. Away!—thou art too ignoble for my arm.
GLUMDALCA. Have at thy heart.
GRIZZLE. Nay, then I thrust at thine.
GLUMDALCA. You push too well; you've run me through the guts.
And I am dead.
GRIZZLE. Then there's an end of one.
THUMB. When thou art dead, then there's an end of two,
[128]Villain!
GRIZZLE. Tom Thumb!
THUMB. Rebel!
GRIZZLE. Tom Thumb!
THUMB. Hell!
GRIZZLE. Huncamunca!
THUMB. Thou hast it there.
GRIZZLE. Too sure I feel it.
THUMB. To hell then, like a rebel as you are,
And give my service to the rebels there.
GRIZZLE. Triumph not, Thumb, nor think thou shalt enjoy
Thy Huncamunca undisturbed; I'll send
[129]My ghost to fetch her to the other world;

to pay a compliment to their country, and sometimes to their prince. None but our author (who seems to have detested the least appearance of flattery) would have passed by such an opportunity of being a political prophet.

[125]I saw the villain, Myron; with these eyes
I saw him. *Busiris*

In both which places it is intimated that it is sometimes possible to see with other eyes than your own.

[126]"This mustard," says Mr. D., "is enough to turn one's stomach. I would be glad to know what idea the author had in his head when he wrote it." This will be, I believe, best explained by a line of Mr. Dennis:

And gave him liberty, the salt of life.
Liberty Asserted

The understanding that can digest the one will not rise at the other.

[127]HAN. Are you the chief whom men famed Scipio call?

SCIP. Are you the much more famous Hannibal? *Hannibal*

[128]Dr. Young seems to have copied this engagement in his *Busiris*:

MYR. Villain!
MEM. Myron!
MYR. Rebel!
MEM. Myron!
MYR. Hell!
MEM. Mandane!

[129]This last speech of my Lord Grizzle hath been of great service to our poets:

I'll hold it fast

[130]It shall but bait at heaven, and then return.
[131]But, ha! I feel death rumbling in my brains:
[132]Some kinder sprite knocks softly at my soul,
And gently whispers it to haste away.
I come, I come, most willingly I come.
[133]So when some city wife, for country air,
To Hampstead or to Highgate does repair,
Her to make haste her husband does implore,
And cries, "My dear, the coach is at the door":
With equal wish, desirous to be gone,
She gets into the coach, and then she cries —"Drive on!"

THUMB. With those last words [134]he vomited his soul,
Which, [135]like whipped cream, the devil will swallow down.
Bear off the body, and cut off the head,
Which I will to the king in triumph lug.
Rebellion's dead, and now I'll go to breakfast. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE X. [*The court*]

KING, HUNCAMUNCA, Courtiers

KING. Open the prisons, set the wretched free,
And bid our treasurer disburse six pounds
To pay their debts.—Let no one weep today.
Come, Dollallolla—[136]curse that odious name!
It is so long, it asks an hour to speak it.
By heavens! I'll change it into Doll, or Loll,
Or any other civil monosyllable
That will not tire my tongue.—Come, sit thee down.
Here seated let us view the dancers' sports;
Bid 'em advance. This is the wedding-day
Of Princess Huncamunca and Tom Thumb;
Tom Thumb! who wins two victories[137] to-day,
And this way marches, bearing Grizzle's head.
(*A dance here*)

[*Enter* NOODLE]

NOODLE. Oh! monstrous, dreadful, terrible, oh! Oh!
Deaf be my ears, forever blind my eyes!
Dumb be my tongue! feet lame! all senses lost!
[138]Howl wolves, grunt bears, hiss snakes, shriek all ye ghosts!

KING. What does the blockhead mean?

NOODLE. I mean, my liege,
[139]Only to grace my tale with decent horror.

As life; and when life's gone, I'll hold this last;
And if thou tak'st it from me when I'm slain,
I'll send my ghost, and fetch it back again.
Conquest of Granada

[130]My soul should with such speed obey,
It should not bait at heaven to stop its way.

Lee seems to have had this last in his eye:

'Twas not my purpose, sir, to tarry there;
I would but go to heaven to take the air.
Gloriana

[131]A rising vapor rumbling in my brains.
Cleomenes

[132]Some kind sprite knocks softly at my soul,
To tell me Fate's at hand.

[133]Mr. Dryden seems to have had this simile in his eye, when he says,

My soul is packing up, and just on wing.
Conquest of Granada

[134]And in a purple vomit poured his soul.
Cleomenes

[135]The devil swallows vulgar souls
Like whipped cream. *Sebastian*

[136]How I could curse my name of Ptolemy!
It is so long, it asks an hour to write it.
By heav'n! I'll change it into Jove or Mars!
Or any other civil monosyllable,
That will not tire my hand. *Cleomenes*

[137]Here is a visible conjunction of two days in one, by which our author may have either intended an emblem of a wedding, or to insinuate that men in the honey-moon are apt to imagine time shorter than it is. It brings into my mind a passage in the comedy called *The Coffee-House Politician* [Fielding's]:

We will celebrate this day at my house to-morrow.

[138]These beautiful phrases are all to be found in one single speech of *King Arthur, or The British Worthy*.

[139]I was but teaching him to grace his tale
With decent horror. *Cleomenes*

Whilst from my garret, twice two stories high,
I looked abroad into the streets below,
I saw Tom Thumb attended by the mob;
Twice twenty shoe-boys, twice two dozen links,
Chairmen and porters, hackney-coachmen, whores;
Aloft he bore the grizzly head of Grizzle;
When of a sudden through the streets there came
A cow, of larger than the usual size,
And in a moment—guess, oh! guess the rest!—
And in a moment swallowed up Tom Thumb.

KING. Shut up again the prisons! bid my treasurer
Not give three farthings out—hang all the culprits,
Guilty or not—no matter.—Ravish virgins:
Go bid the schoolmasters whip all their boys!
Let lawyers, parsons, and physicians loose,
To rob, impose on, and to kill the world.

NOODLE. Her majesty the queen is in a swoon.

QUEEN. Not so much in a swoon but I have still
Strength to reward the messenger of ill news.
(*Kills* NOODLE)

NOODLE. Oh! I am slain.

CLEORA. My lover's killed, I will revenge him so. (*Kills the* QUEEN)

HUNCAMUNCA. My mamma killed! vile murtheress, beware. (*Kills* CLEORA)

DOODLE. This for an old grudge—to thy heart! (*Kills* HUNCAMUNCA)

MUSTACHA. And this
I drive to thine, O Doodle! for a new one.
(*Kills* DOODLE)

KING. Ha! murtheress vile, take that.
(*Kills* MUSTACHA)

[140]And take thou this.
(*Kills himself, and falls*)

[140]We may say with Dryden,

Death did at length so many slain forget,
So when the child, whom nurse from danger guards,
Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards,
Kings, queens, and knaves throw one another down,
Till the whole pack lies scattered and o'erthrown;
So all our pack upon the floor is cast,
And all I boast is—that I fall the last.
(*Dies*)

[CURTAIN]

And left the tale, and took them by the great.
[*Conquest of Granada*]

I know of no tragedy which comes nearer to this charming and bloody catastrophe than *Cleomenes*, where the curtain covers five principal characters dead on the stage. These lines too—

I asked no questions then, of who killed who?
The bodies tell the story as they lie—

seem to have belonged more properly to this scene of our author; nor can I help imagining they were originally his. *The Rival Ladies*, too, seem beholden to this scene:

We're now a chain of lovers linked in death;
Julia goes first, Gonsalvo hangs on her,
And Angelina hangs upon Gonsalvo,
As I on Angelina.

No scene, I believe, ever received greater honors than this. It was applauded by several encores, a word very unusual in tragedy. And it was very difficult for the actors to escape without a second slaughter. This I take to be a lively assurance of that fierce spirit of liberty which remains among us, and which Mr. Dryden, in his *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*, hath observed: "Whether custom," says he, "hath so insinuated itself into our countrymen, or nature hath so formed them to fierceness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats and other objects of horror to be taken from them." And indeed I am for having them encouraged in this martial disposition: nor do I believe our victories over the French have been owing to anything more than to those bloody spectacles daily exhibited in our tragedies, of which the French stage is so entirely clear.

THE LONDON MERCHANT; OR, THE HISTORY OF GEORGE BARNWELL

By George Lillo

Learn to be wise from others' harm,
And you shall do full well.
Old Ballad of *The Lady's Fall*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Thorowgood
Barnwell, uncle to George
George Barnwell
Trueman
Blunt
[Jailer]
[John]

Women

Maria
Millwood
Lucy

Officers with their Attendants, Keeper, and Footmen

Scene: *London and an adjacent village*
[Time: *about 1585*]

[DEDICATION]

To Sir John Eyles, Baronet, Member of Parliament for, and Alderman of the City of London, and Sub-Governor of the South Sea Company

Sir,

If Tragic Poetry be, as Mr. Dryden has somewhere said, the most excellent and most useful kind of writing, the more extensively useful the moral of any tragedy is, the more excellent that piece must be of its kind.

I hope I shall not be thought to insinuate that this, to which I have presumed to prefix your name, is such; that depends on its fitness to answer the end of tragedy, the exciting of the passions in order to the correcting such of them as are criminal, either in their nature, or through their excess. Whether the following scenes do this in any tolerable degree, is, with the deference that becomes one who would not be thought vain, submitted to your candid and impartial judgment.

What I would infer is this, I think, evident truth; that tragedy is so far from losing its dignity by being accommodated to the circumstances of the generality of mankind that it is more truly august in proportion to the extent of its influence and the numbers that are properly affected by it—as it is more truly great to be the instrument of good to many who stand in need of our assistance, than to a very small part of that number.

If princes, etc. were alone liable to misfortunes arising from vice or weakness in themselves or others, there would be good reason for confining the characters in tragedy to those of superior rank; but, since the contrary is evident, nothing can be more reasonable than to proportion the remedy to the disease.

I am far from denying that tragedies, founded on any instructive and extraordinary events in history, or a well-invented fable, where the persons introduced are of the highest rank, are without their use, even to the bulk of the audience. The strong contrast between a Tamerlane and a Bajazet,[1] may have its weight with an unsteady people, and contribute to the fixing of them in the interest of a prince of the character of the former, when, thro' their own levity or the arts of designing men, they are rendered factious and uneasy, tho' they have the highest reason to be satisfied. The sentiments and ex-

[1] In Marlowe's play.

ample of a Cato may inspire his spectators with a just sense of the value of liberty, when they see that honest patriot prefer death to an obligation from a tyrant who would sacrifice the constitution of his country and the liberties of mankind, to his ambition or revenge. I have attempted, indeed, to enlarge the province of the graver kind of poetry, and should be glad to see it carried on by some abler hand. Plays founded on moral tales in private life may be of admirable use, by carrying conviction to the mind with such irresistible force as to engage all the faculties and powers of the soul in the cause of virtue, by stifling vice in its first principles. They who imagine this to be too much to be attributed to tragedy, must be strangers to the energy of that noble species of poetry. Shakespeare, who has given such amazing proofs of his genius, in that as well as in comedy, in his *Hamlet* has the following lines:

> Had he the motive and the cause for passion
> That I have, he would drown the stage with tears
> And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
> Make mad the guilty, and appall the free;
> Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
> The very faculty of eyes and ears.

And farther, in the same speech:

> I've heard that guilty creatures at a play
> Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
> Been so struck to the soul, that presently
> They have proclaimed their malefactions.

Prodigious! yet strictly just. But I shan't take up your valuable time with my remarks; only give me leave just to observe, that he seems so firmly persuaded of the power of a well-wrote[1] piece to produce the effect here ascribed to it, as to make Hamlet venture his soul on the event, and rather trust that than a messenger from the other world, tho' it assumed, as he expresses it, his noble father's form, and assured him that it was his spirit. "I'll have," says Hamlet, "grounds more relative";

> . . . The Play's the thing,
> Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

Such plays are the best answers to them who deny the lawfulness of the stage.

Considering the novelty of this attempt, I thought it would be expected from me to say something in its excuse; and I was unwilling to lose the opportunity of saying something of the usefulness of tragedy in general, and what may be reasonably expected from the farther improvement of this excellent kind of poetry.

Sir, I hope you will not think I have said too much of an art, a mean specimen of which I am ambitious enough to recommend to your favor and protection. A mind conscious of superior worth, as much despises flattery as it is above it. Had I found in myself an inclination to so contemptible a vice, I should not have chose[1] Sir John Eyles for my patron. And indeed the best-writ panegyric, tho' strictly true, must place you in a light much inferior to that in which you have long been fixed by the love and esteem of your fellow citizens, whose choice of you for one of their representatives in Parliament has sufficiently declared their sense of your merit. Nor hath the knowledge of your worth been confined to the City. The proprietors in the South Sea Company, in which are included numbers of persons as considerable for their rank, fortune, and understanding as any in the kingdom, gave the greatest proof of their confidence in your capacity and probity when they chose you Sub-Governor of their Company at a time when their affairs were in the utmost confusion and their properties in the greatest danger. Nor is the Court insensible of your importance. I shall not therefore attempt your character, nor pretend to add anything to a reputation so well established.

Whatever others may think of a dedication wherein there is so much said of other things, and so little of the person to whom it is addressed, I have reason to believe that you will the more easily pardon it on that very account.

I am, sir,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

George Lillo

PROLOGUE

Spoke by Mr. Cibber, Jun.

The Tragic Muse, sublime, delights to show
Princes distressed and scenes of royal woe;
In awful pomp, majestic, to relate
The fall of nations or some hero's fate:
That sceptered chiefs may by example know
The strange vicissitude of things below;
What dangers on security attend;
How pride and cruelty in ruin end;
Hence Providence supreme to know, and own
Humanity adds glory to a throne.

[1] Common errors in verb forms during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In ev'ry former age and foreign tongue
With native grandeur thus the Goddess sung.
Upon our stage, indeed, with wished success,
You've sometimes seen her in a humbler dress—
Great only in distress. When she complains
In Southern's, Rowe's, or Otway's moving strains,
The brilliant drops that fall from each bright eye
The absent pomp with brighter gems supply.
Forgive us then, if we attempt to show,
In artless strains, a tale of private woe.
A London 'prentice ruined, is our theme,
Drawn from the famed old song that bears his name.
We hope your taste is not so high to scorn
A moral tale, esteemed ere you were born;
Which, for a century of rolling years,
Has filled a thousand-thousand eyes with tears.
If thoughtless youth to warn, and shame the age
From vice destructive, well becomes the stage;
If this example innocence secure,
Prevent our guilt, or by reflection cure;
If Millwood's dreadful guilt and sad despair
Commend the virtue of the good and fair:
Tho' art be wanting, and our numbers fail,
Indulge th'attempt, in justice to the tale!

ACT I

SCENE I. *A room in Thorowgood's house*

[*Enter*] THOROWGOOD *and* TRUEMAN

TRUEMAN. Sir, the packet from Genoa is arrived. (*Gives letters*)

THOROWGOOD. Heav'n be praised! The storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty and laws, is for a time diverted. The haughty and revengeful Spaniard, disappointed of the loan on which he depended from Genoa, must now attend the slow return of wealth from his new world, to supply his empty coffers ere he can execute his purposed invasion of our happy island; by which means time is gained to make such preparations on our part as may, Heav'n concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

TRUEMAN. He must be insensible, indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned.—Sir, may I know by what means—if I am too bold—

THOROWGOOD. Your curiosity is laudable. And I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession you may with honest scorn reject whatever is unworthy of it.

TRUEMAN. Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honorable name, we must be left without excuse.

THOROWGOOD. You compliment, young man. (TRUEMAN *bows respectfully*) Nay, I'm not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him; only take heed not to purchase the character of complaisant at the expense of your sincerity.—But to answer your question. The bank of Genoa had agreed, at excessive interest and on good security, to advance the King of Spain a sum of money sufficient to equip his vast Armada; of which our peerless Elizabeth (more than in name the Mother of her People) being well informed, sent Walsingham, her wise and faithful secretary, to consult the merchants of this loyal city, who all agreed to direct their several agents to influence, if possible, the Genoese to break their contract with the Spanish court. 'Tis done; the state and bank of Genoa, having maturely weighed and rightly judged of their true interest, prefer the friendship of the merchants of London to that of a monarch who proudly styles himself King of both Indies.

TRUEMAN. Happy success of prudent councils! What an expense of blood and treasure is here saved! Excellent Queen!

Oh, how unlike to former princes, who made the danger of foreign enemies a pretence to oppress their subjects by taxes great and grievous to be borne. 65

THOROWGOOD. Not so our gracious Queen, whose richest exchequer is her people's love, as their happiness her greatest glory.

TRUEMAN. On these terms to defend us, is to make our protection a benefit worthy her who confers it, and well worth our acceptance.—Sir, have you any commands for me at this time? 73

THOROWGOOD. Only to look carefully over the files to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; and if there are, to send and discharge 'em. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance.

[*Exit* TRUEMAN]

SCENE II

THOROWGOOD *and* MARIA

THOROWGOOD. —Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best; that the courtiers, tho' they should deny us citizens politeness, may at least commend our hospitality. 7

MARIA. Sir, I have endeavored not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

THOROWGOOD. Nay, 'twas a needless caution; I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

MARIA. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation at present. I should but increase the number of the company without adding to their satisfaction. 16

THOROWGOOD. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

MARIA. Company will but increase it. I wish you would dispense with my absence; solitude best suits my present temper. 21

THOROWGOOD. You are not insensible that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honor so frequently to grace my board; should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent their condescension and think their labor lost. 27

MARIA. He that shall think his time or honor lost in visiting you can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is that she is yours. The man of quality who chooses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honor by so doing, but he loses none. 35

THOROWGOOD. Come, come, Maria; I need not tell you that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, yet intend me no disrespect at all; for, tho' he may lose no honor in my company, 'tis very natural for him to expect more pleasure in yours. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest man in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's. 46

MARIA. Yours no doubt was as agreeable to her, for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual. 49

THOROWGOOD. Thou know'st I have no heir, no child but thee; the fruits of many years' successful industry must all be thine. Now, it would give me pleasure great as my love, to see on whom you would bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you, but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that by observation I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the marriage state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it. 62

MARIA. What can I say? How shall I answer, as I ought, this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example; yet had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here with equal esteem but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obeyed, I had submitted and to my duty sacrificed my peace. 74

THOROWGOOD. From your perfect obedience in every other instance I feared as much, and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned. 79

MARIA. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not, but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man who owns them to my affections. 85

THOROWGOOD. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, tho' they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light. 91

MARIA. I cannot answer for my inclinations, but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority; and, as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, so love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire? 98

THOROWGOOD. I'll see you to your chamber. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE III. *A room in Millwood's house*

MILLWOOD [*at her toilet*]. LUCY, *waiting*

MILLWOOD. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

LUCY. Oh, killingly, madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible! But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at? 6

MILLWOOD. A conquest would be new indeed!

LUCY. Not to you, who make 'em every day, but to me.—Well! 'tis what I'm never to expect, unfortunate as I am. But your wit and beauty— 12

MILLWOOD. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous or sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us. We are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them but as we contribute to their satisfaction. 18

LUCY. You are certainly, madam, on the wrong side in this argument. Is not the expense all theirs? And I am sure it is our own fault if we haven't our share of the pleasure. 23

MILLWOOD. We are but slaves to men.

LUCY. Nay, 'tis they that are slaves most certainly; for we lay them under contribution. 27

MILLWOOD. Slaves have no property—no, not even in themselves. All is the victor's.

LUCY. You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, madam. 32

MILLWOOD. I would have my conquests complete, like those of the Spaniards in the New World; who first plundered the natives of all the wealth they had, and then condemned the wretches to the mines for life to work for more. 38

LUCY. Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government; I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment. 42

MILLWOOD. It's a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honor or honesty, is capable of any action, tho' never so vile; and yet, what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinions! Then is it not just, the villains, to their cost, should find us so?—But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who, having never injured women, apprehend no injury from them. 57

LUCY. Aye, they must be young indeed.

MILLWOOD. Such a one, I think, I have found.—As I've passed thro' the City, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence. 64

LUCY. Is he handsome?

MILLWOOD. Aye, aye, the stripling is well made.

LUCY. About—

MILLWOOD. Eighteen.

LUCY. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen.—You'll be vastly happy.—Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

MILLWOOD. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and, gazing wishfully on his face, asked him his name. He blushed, and bowing very low, answered: "George Barnwell." I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honor and reputation, and invited him to my house. He swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him. (*Knocking at the door*) Somebody knocks.—D'ye hear; I am at home to nobody to-day but him.

Exit LUCY

SCENE IV

MILLWOOD

MILLWOOD. —Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence, and I am strangely mistaken if this does not prove of great importance to me and him too, before I have done with him.—Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider —what manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take care not to shock him at first.—But then, if I have any skill in physiognomy, he is amorous, and, with a little assistance, will soon get the better of his modesty.—I'll trust to Nature, who does wonders in these matters.—If to seem what one is not, in order to be the better liked for what one really is; if to speak one thing, and mean the direct contrary, be art in a woman—I know nothing of nature.

SCENE V

[*Enter*] *to her* BARNWELL, *bowing very low*, [*followed by*] LUCY *at a distance*

MILLWOOD. Sir! the surprise and joy—

BARNWELL. Madam—

MILLWOOD. (*Advancing*) This is such a favor—

BARNWELL. Pardon me, madam—

MILLWOOD. (*Still advances*) So unhoped for—(BARNWELL *salutes her, and retires in confusion*)—to see you here.—Excuse the confusion—

BARNWELL. I fear I am too bold.

MILLWOOD. Alas, sir! All my apprehensions proceed from my fears of your thinking me so.—Please, sir, to sit.—I am as much at a loss how to receive this honor as I ought, as I am surprised at your goodness in conferring it.

BARNWELL. I thought you had expected me —I promised to come.

MILLWOOD. That is the more surprising; few men are such religious observers of their word.

BARNWELL. All who are honest are.

MILLWOOD. To one another.—But we silly women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in your remembrance.

(*Laying her hand on his, as by accident*)

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) Her disorder is so great, she don't[1] perceive she has laid her hand on mine.—Heaven! how she trembles! —What can this mean?

MILLWOOD. The interest I have in all that relates to you (the reason of which you shall know hereafter), excites my curiosity; and, were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular affair.

BARNWELL. Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject; I have none that I would conceal.

MILLWOOD. You'll think me bold.

BARNWELL. No indeed.

MILLWOOD. What then are your thoughts of love?

[1] So given.

BARNWELL. If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it at all.—My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. —I don't know that person in the world whose happiness I don't wish and wouldn't promote, were it in my power.—In an especial manner I love my uncle and my master, but, above all, my friend. 54

MILLWOOD. You have a friend then whom you love?

BARNWELL. As he does me, sincerely.

MILLWOOD. He is, no doubt, often blessed with your company and conversation. 59

BARNWELL. We live in one house together, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

MILLWOOD. Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee, and so must all who see and know this youth.—What have I lost, by being formed a woman! I hate my sex—myself. Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it; but, as it is—oh! 69

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) I never observed women before, or this is sure the most beautiful of her sex!—You seem disordered, madam! May I know the cause? 73

MILLWOOD. Do not ask me.—I can never speak it, whatever is the cause.—I wish for things impossible.—I would be a servant, bound to the same master as you are, to live in one house with you. 78

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! And the effect they have on me is as strange. I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone, while I have power to go.—Madam, I humbly take my leave. 84

MILLWOOD. You will not sure leave me so soon!

BARNWELL. Indeed, I must.

MILLWOOD. You cannot be so cruel!—I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company. 90

BARNWELL. I am sorry I must refuse the honor that you designed me, but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service; he is so gentle, and so good a master, that, should I wrong him, tho' he might forgive me, I never should forgive myself. 97

MILLWOOD. Am I refused, by the first man, the second favor I ever stooped to ask? —Go then, thou proud, hard-hearted youth! But know, you are the only man that could be found who would let me sue twice for greater favors. 103

BARNWELL. [*Aside*] What shall I do!—How shall I go or stay!

MILLWOOD. Yet do not, do not, leave me! I wish my sex's pride would meet your scorn, but when I look upon you—when I behold those eyes—oh! spare my tongue, and let my blushes speak. This flood of tears to that will force their way, and declare—what woman's modesty should hide. 112

BARNWELL. [*Aside*] Oh, heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am; her looks, her words, her flowing tears confess it. And can I leave her, then? Oh, never, never!—Madam, dry up those tears! You shall command me always; I will stay here forever, if you'd have me. 119

LUCY. (*Aside*) So! she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship or myself. 124

MILLWOOD. Now you are kind, indeed; but I mean not to detain you always. I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master, but you may serve him still.

LUCY. (*Aside*) Serve him still!—Aye, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash, and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. 132

SCENE VI

To them BLUNT

BLUNT. Madam, supper's on the table.

MILLWOOD. Come, sir, you'll excuse all defects.—My thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment.

[*Exeunt* MILLWOOD *and* BARNWELL]

Scene VII

Lucy *and* Blunt

Blunt. What! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. What! is our mistress turned fool at last? She's in love with him, I suppose.

Lucy. I suppose not; but she designs to make him in love with her if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow; while she's endeavoring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence, for I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes, so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, as men are ours—though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves; but that, I dare say, will never be the case with our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so, for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that, for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true, the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon't. *Exeunt*

Scene VIII

Barnwell *and* Millwood *at an entertainment*

Barnwell. What can I answer? All that I know is, that you are fair and I am miserable.

Millwood. We are both so, and yet the fault is in ourselves.

Barnwell. To ease our present anguish by plunging into guilt, is to buy a moment's pleasure with an age of pain.

Millwood. I should have thought the joys of love as lasting as they are great. If ours prove otherwise, 'tis your inconstancy must make them so.

Barnwell. The law of Heaven will not be reversed, and that requires us to govern our passions.

Millwood. To give us sense of beauty and desires, and yet forbid us to taste and be happy, is cruelty to nature. Have we passions only to torment us?

Barnwell. To hear you talk, tho' in the cause of vice—to gaze upon your beauty—press your hand—and see your snow-white bosom heave and fall—inflames my wishes. My pulse beats high—my senses all are in a hurry, and I am on the rack of wild desire. Yet, for a moment's guilty pleasure, shall I lose my innocence, my peace of mind, and hopes of solid happiness?

Millwood. Chimeras all!—Come on with me and prove
No joys like woman kind, nor heav'n like love.

Barnwell. [*Aside*] I would not, yet must on.—

Reluctant thus, the merchant quits his ease,
And trusts to rocks, and sands, and stormy seas;
In hopes some unknown golden coast to find,
Commits himself, tho' doubtful, to the wind;
Longs much for joys to come, yet mourns those left behind.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT II

Scene I. *A room in Thorowgood's house*

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. How strange are all things round me! Like some thief, who treads forbidden ground, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that was too little, already have I added breach of trust.—A thief!—Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Tho' hypocrisy may a while conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the meantime, what must be my life? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes in order to conceal 'em!—Sure, such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity; like me, disconsolate he wandered, and, while yet in heaven, bore all his future hell about him. 19

Enter TRUEMAN

Scene II

BARNWELL *and* TRUEMAN

TRUEMAN. Barnwell! Oh, how I rejoice to see you safe! So will our master and his gentle daughter, who during your absence often inquired after you. 4

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) Would he were gone! His officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul.

TRUEMAN. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't[1] conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent? When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away? why thus avoid me? What have I done? how am I altered since you saw me last? Or rather, what have you done? and why are you thus changed, for I am still the same. 17

[1] So given.

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) What have I done, indeed!

TRUEMAN. Not speak nor look upon me!

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) By my face he will discover all I would conceal; methinks, already I begin to hate him. 23

TRUEMAN. I cannot bear this usage from a friend—one whom till now I ever found so loving—whom yet I love, tho' this unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

BARNWELL. (*Turning to him*) I am not well. Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld them last. 31

TRUEMAN. Heavy they look indeed, and swol'n with tears; now they o'erflow. Rightly did my sympathizing heart forbode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace. 36

BARNWELL. Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone; you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me give you a moment's pain. 41

TRUEMAN. You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief I felt it. Since we parted last I have slept no more than you, but pensive in my chamber sat alone and spent the tedious night in wishes for your safety and return; e'en now, tho' ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart. 49

BARNWELL. 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease, as circumstances and occasions vary; and, since you once may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

TRUEMAN [*Aside*]—Sure, I but dream! Without a cause would Barnwell use me thus?—Ungenerous and ungrateful youth, farewell! I shall endeavor to follow your advice. (*Going*) [*Aside*] Yet stay; perhaps I am too rash, and angry when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befal'n him, too great to bear. 63

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) What part am I reduced to act! 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus—the best of friends and men!

TRUEMAN. I am to blame; prithee, forgive me, Barnwell! Try to compose your ruffled mind, and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself. My friendly counsel may restore your peace.

BARNWELL. All that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship may effect; but here even that's in vain.

TRUEMAN. Something dreadful is laboring in your breast. Oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter by the part I bear.

BARNWELL. [*Aside*] Vain supposition! My woes increase by being observed; should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

TRUEMAN. So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbor there.

BARNWELL. Oh, torture insupportable!

TRUEMAN. Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

BARNWELL. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof nor see your face again.

TRUEMAN. 'Tis strange.—But I have done. Say but you hate me not!

BARNWELL. Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

TRUEMAN. Shall our friendship still continue?

BARNWELL. It's a blessing I never was worthy of, yet now must stand on terms, and but upon conditions can confirm it.

TRUEMAN. What are they?

BARNWELL. Never hereafter, tho' you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

TRUEMAN. 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions, I must be your friend.

BARNWELL. Then, as much as one lost to himself can be another's, I am yours. (*Embracing*)

TRUEMAN. Be ever so, and may Heav'n restore your peace!

BARNWELL. Will yesterday return? We have heard the glorious sun, that till then incessant rolled, once stopped his rapid course, and once went back. The dead have risen, and parched rocks poured forth a liquid stream to quench a people's thirst. The sea divided and formed walls of water, while a whole nation passed in safety thro' its sandy bosom. Hungry lions have refused their prey, and men unhurt have walked amidst consuming flames. But never yet did time, once past, return.

TRUEMAN. Tho' the continued chain of time has never once been broke, nor ever will, but uninterrupted must keep on its course, till lost in eternity it ends there where it first begun; yet, as Heav'n can repair whatever evils time can bring upon us, he who trusts Heav'n ought never to despair. But business requires our attendance—business, the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

BARNWELL. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has passed, and follow you.

Exit TRUEMAN

SCENE III

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. —I might have trusted Trueman to have applied to my uncle to have repaired the wrong I have done my master —but what of Millwood? Must I expose her too? Ungenerous and base! Then Heav'n requires it not.—But Heaven requires that I forsake her. What! never see her more! Does Heaven require that?—I hope I may see her, and Heav'n not be offended. Presumptuous hope—dearly already have I proved my frailty; should I once more tempt Heav'n, I may be left to fall never to rise again. Yet shall I leave her, forever leave her, and not let her know the cause?—she who loves me with such a boundless passion. —Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she then must feel by what I now endure. The love of life and fear of shame, opposed by inclination strong as death or shame, like wind and tide in raging conflict met, when neither can prevail, keep me in doubt. How then can I determine?

[*Enter* THOROWGOOD]

Scene IV

THOROWGOOD *and* BARNWELL

THOROWGOOD. Without a cause assigned, or notice given, to absent yourself last night was a fault, young man, and I came to chide you for it, but hope I am prevented. That modest blush, the confusion so visible in your face, speak grief and shame. When we have offended Heaven, it requires no more; and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon or love be of moment to your peace, look up, secure of both. 11

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) This goodness has o'ercome me.—O sir! you know not the nature and extent of my offence, and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive 'em. Tho' I had rather die than speak my shame; tho' racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast, your kindness has.

THOROWGOOD. Enough, enough; whate'er it be, this concern shows you're convinced, and I am satisfied. (*Aside*) How painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenuous mind—some youthful folly which it were prudent not to enquire into.—When we consider the frail condition of humanity, it may raise our pity, not our wonder, that youth should go astray when Reason, weak at the best when opposed to Inclination, scarce formed and wholly unassisted by Experience, faintly contends, or willingly becomes the slave of Sense. The state of youth is much to be deplored, and the more so because they see it not, they being then to danger most exposed when they are least prepared for their defence. 35

BARNWELL. It will be known, and you recall your pardon and abhor me.

THOROWGOOD. I never will, so Heav'n confirm to me the pardon of my offences! Yet be upon your guard in this gay, thoughtless season of your life. Now, when the sense of pleasure's quick and passion high, the voluptuous appetites raging and fierce demand the strongest curb, take heed of a relapse. When vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost. 46

BARNWELL. Hear me, then, on my knees confess—

THOROWGOOD. I will not hear a syllable more upon this subject; it were not mercy, but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal. 52

BARNWELL. This generosity amazes and distracts me.

THOROWGOOD. This remorse makes thee dearer to me than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your fault, of this I'm certain; 'twas harder for you to offend than me to pardon. *Exit* 59

Scene V

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. Villain, villain, villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man! Should I again return to folly—detested thought!—But what of Millwood then?—Why, I renounce her—I give her up.—The struggle's over and Virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but Gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction. (*Going*)

Scene VI

[*Enter*] *to him a* Footman

FOOTMAN. Sir, two ladies from your uncle in the country desire to see you.

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) Who should they be?—Tell them I'll wait upon 'em. 4

Exit Footman

Scene VII

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. —Methinks I dread to see 'em. Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me! Now everything alarms me.

Scene VIII

Another room in THOROWGOOD'S *house*

MILLWOOD *and* LUCY; [*enter*] *to them a* Footman

FOOTMAN. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

MILLWOOD. 'Tis very well.—I thank you.

Exit Footman

Scene IX

MILLWOOD *and* LUCY

[*Enter* BARNWELL]

BARNWELL. [*Aside*]—Confusion!—Millwood!

MILLWOOD. That angry look tells me that here I'm an unwelcome guest. I feared as much—the unhappy are so everywhere. 5

BARNWELL. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

MILLWOOD. Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

BARNWELL. How did you gain admission? 11

MILLWOOD. Saying we were desired by your uncle to visit and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion, and with much respect directed here. 16

BARNWELL. Why did you come at all?

MILLWOOD. I never shall trouble you more; I'm come to take my leave forever. Such is the malice of my fate. I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left me. One short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you—for whom I thought the longest life too short. 24

BARNWELL. Then we are met to part forever?

MILLWOOD. It must be so; yet think not that time or absence ever shall put a period to my grief or make me love you less: tho' I must leave you, yet condemn me not! 30

BARNWELL. Condemn you? No, I approve your resolution and rejoice to hear it. 'Tis just; 'tis necessary. I have well weighed, and found it so. 34

LUCY. (*Aside*) I'm afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had.

BARNWELL. Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

MILLWOOD. (*Aside*) Confusion! 39

LUCY. (*Aside*) Aye! we are all out! This is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves. 43

MILLWOOD. 'Twas some relief to think, tho' absent, you would love me still. But to find, tho' Fortune had been kind, that you, more cruel and inconstant, had resolved to cast me off—this, as I never could expect, I have not learned to bear. 49

BARNWELL. I am sorry to hear you blame in me a resolution that so well becomes us both.

MILLWOOD. I have reason for what I do, but you have none. 54

BARNWELL. Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we never had met?

MILLWOOD. Look on me, Barnwell! Am I deformed or old, that satiety so soon succeeds enjoyment? Nay, look again; am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex? whose hand, trembling with ecstasy, you pressed and moulded thus, while on my eyes you gazed with such delight, as if desire increased by being fed? 66

BARNWELL. No more! Let me repent my former follies, if possible, without rememb'ring what they were.

MILLWOOD. Why? 70

BARNWELL. Such is my frailty that 'tis dangerous.

MILLWOOD. Where is the danger, since we are to part? 74

BARNWELL. The thought of that already is too painful.

MILLWOOD. If it be painful to part, then I may hope at least you do not hate me?

BARNWELL. No—no—I never said I did. —O my heart!—

MILLWOOD. Perhaps you pity me? 81

BARNWELL. I do—I do—indeed, I do.

MILLWOOD. You'll think upon me?

BARNWELL. Doubt it not, while I can think at all! 85

MILLWOOD. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favor, though it would be the last? (*He draws back*) A look shall then suffice—farewell forever. 89

Exit with LUCY

Scene X

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. If to resolve to suffer be to conquer, I have conquered. Painful victory!

Scene XI

[*Reënter* MILLWOOD *and* LUCY]

BARNWELL, MILLWOOD *and* LUCY

MILLWOOD. One thing I had forgot; I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution—and that perhaps was needless.

BARNWELL. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

MILLWOOD. (*To* LUCY) My friend, your arm.—Now I am gone forever. (*Going*)

BARNWELL. One thing more: sure, there's no danger in my knowing where you go? If you think otherwise—

MILLWOOD. (*Weeping*) Alas!

LUCY. (*Aside*) We are right, I find; that's my cue.—Ah, dear sir, she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

BARNWELL. Humanity obliges me to wish you well. Why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

LUCY. Nay, there's no help for it. She must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible; it was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

MILLWOOD. No more, my friend, since he for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind and pities me. Where'er I wander through wilds and deserts, benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

BARNWELL. For my sake? Oh, tell me how! which way am I so cursed as to bring such ruin on thee?

MILLWOOD. No matter; I am contented with my lot.

BARNWELL. Leave me not in this incertainty!

MILLWOOD. I have said too much.

BARNWELL. How, how am I the cause of your undoing?

MILLWOOD. 'Twill but increase your troubles.

BARNWELL. My troubles can't be greater than they are.

LUCY. Well, well, sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

BARNWELL. I am bound to you beyond expression.

MILLWOOD. Remember, sir, that I desired you not to hear it.

BARNWELL. Begin, and ease my racking expectation!

LUCY. Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child; but her parents, dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

MILLWOOD. Aye, aye, the barbarous man is rich enough—but what are riches when compared to love?

LUCY. For a while he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hired her servants.—But you have seen in what manner she lived; so I need say no more of that.

MILLWOOD. How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

LUCY. All things went on as one could wish till, some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love with his charge, and would fain have married her. Now, the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good, personable sort of a man; but I don't know how it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him—

MILLWOOD. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account, he had stripped of all before.

LUCY. Now, she, having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compelled her to pass his ac-

count, and give bond for the sum he demanded, but still provided handsomely for her and continued his courtship till, being informed by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertained at her house and stayed with her all night, he came this morning raving and storming like a madman; talks no more of marriage—so there's no hopes of making up matters that way—but vows her ruin unless she'll allow him the same favor that he supposes she granted you. 99

BARNWELL. Must she be ruined or find her refuge in another's arms?

MILLWOOD. He gave me but an hour to resolve in. That's happily spent with you—and now I go. 104

BARNWELL. To be exposed to all the rigors of the various seasons, the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused to wander friendless thro' the unhospitable world, in misery and want, attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge—wouldst thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing to prevent it? 113

LUCY. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out!

BARNWELL. [*Aside*] Oh, where are all my resolutions now? Like early vapors, or the morning dew, chased by the sun's warm beams, they're vanished and lost, as tho' they had never been. 120

LUCY. Now, I advised her, sir, to comply with the gentleman; that would not only put an end to her troubles, but make her fortune at once. 124

BARNWELL. Tormenting fiend, away!—I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him; I will myself prevent her ruin, tho' with my own. A moment's patience; I'll return immediately. *Exit*

SCENE XII

MILLWOOD *and* LUCY

LUCY. 'Twas well you came, or by what I can perceive you had lost him.

MILLWOOD. That, I must confess, was a danger I did not foresee. I was only afraid he should have come without money. You know a house of entertainment like mine is not kept with nothing. 7

LUCY. That's very true. But then, you should be reasonable in your demands; 'tis pity to discourage a young man.

SCENE XIII

[*Enter*] BARNWELL [*with a bag of money*]. MILLWOOD *and* LUCY

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) What am I about to do! Now you, who boast your reason all-sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me whether it's right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past. 7

LUCY. [*Aside*] These young sinners think everything in the ways of wickedness so strange. But I could tell him that this is nothing but what's very common; for one vice as naturally begets another, as a father a son. But he'll find out that himself if he lives long enough. 14

BARNWELL. Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

MILLWOOD. So I may hope to see you there again. 19

BARNWELL. Answer me not, but fly—lest, in the agonies of my remorse, I take again what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery!

MILLWOOD. Say but you'll come! 24

BARNWELL. You are my fate, my heaven, or my hell. Only leave me now; dispose of me hereafter as you please.

Exeunt MILLWOOD *and* LUCY

SCENE XIV

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. —What have I done! Were my resolutions founded on reason and sincerely made, why then has Heaven suffered me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and

if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives.—Is virtue inconsistent with itself, or are vice and virtue only empty names? Or do they depend on accidents, beyond our power to produce or to prevent—wherein we have no part, and yet must be determined by the event? But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse. I find I am lost, cast down from all my late erected hopes, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why— 16

Such undistinguished horrors make my brain,
Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain.
[*Exit*]

ACT III

Scene I. [*A room in* Thorowgood's *house*]

Thorowgood *and* Trueman [*sitting at a table with account books*]

Thorowgood. Methinks, I would not have you only learn the method of merchandise, and practise it hereafter merely as a means of getting wealth; 'twill be well worth your pains to study it as a science. See how it is founded in reason and the nature of things; how it has promoted humanity, as it has opened and yet keeps up an intercourse between nations, far remote from one another in situation, customs and religion; promoting arts, industry, peace and plenty; by mutual benefits diffusing mutual love from pole to pole. 13

Trueman. Something of this I have considered, and hope, by your assistance, to extend my thoughts much farther. I have observed those countries where trade is promoted and encouraged, do not make discoveries to destroy, but to improve, mankind by love and friendship; to tame the fierce and polish the most savage; to teach them the advantages of honest traffic by taking from them, with their own consent, their useless superfluities, and giving them in return what, from their ignorance in manual arts, their situation, or some other accident, they stand in need of. 27

Thorowgood. 'Tis justly observed. The populous East, luxuriant, abounds with glittering gems, bright pearls, aromatic spices, and health-restoring drugs. The late found Western World glows with unnumbered veins of gold and silver ore. On every climate and on every country, Heaven has bestowed some good peculiar to itself. It is the industrious merchant's business to collect the various blessings of each soil and climate, and, with the product of the whole, to enrich his native country.—Well! I have examined your accounts. They are not only just, as I have always found them, but regularly kept and fairly entered. I commend your diligence. Method in business is the surest guide. He who neglects it frequently stumbles, and always wanders perplexed, uncertain, and in danger.—Are Barnwell's accounts ready for my inspection? He does not use to be the last on these occasions. 48

Trueman. Upon receiving your orders he retired, I thought, in some confusion. If you please, I'll go and hasten him. I hope he hasn't been guilty of any neglect. 52

Thorowgood. I'm now going to the Exchange; let him know, at my return I expect to find him ready. *Exeunt*

Scene II

[*Enter*] Maria *with a book; sits and reads*

Maria. How forcible is truth! The weakest mind, inspired with love of that, fixed and collected in itself, with indifference beholds the united force of earth and hell opposing. Such souls are raised above the sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not. The martyr cheaply purchases his heaven. Small are his sufferings, great is his reward; not so the wretch who combats love with duty, when the mind, weakened and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless opposes its own desires.—What is an hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures such as these? 14

Scene III

[*Enter* Trueman]

Trueman and Maria

Trueman. O Barnwell! O my friend, how art thou fallen!

Maria. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak!—say, what of Barnwell! 4

Trueman. 'Tis not to be concealed. I've news to tell of him that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who knew him.

Maria. Defend us Heaven! 9

Trueman. I cannot speak it.—See there. (*Gives a letter.* Maria *reads*)

Trueman,

I know my absence will surprise my honored master and yourself, and the more when you shall understand that the reason of my withdrawing, is my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known by examining my accounts, yet, to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost 22

George Barnwell

Trueman. Lost indeed! Yet how he should be guilty of what he there charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue: justly he thought, and as he thought he practised. Never was life more regular than his—an understanding uncommon at his years—an open, generous manliness of temper—his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging. 33

Maria. This and much more you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye and joy of every heart that knew him. 37

Trueman. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss?—See! the fairest and happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor ruined Barnwell! 42

Maria. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice?

Trueman. Never, never! So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity. 49

Maria. Is there no means yet to preserve him?

Trueman. Oh, that there were! But few men recover reputation lost—a merchant, never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face. 56

Maria. I fear as much—and therefore would never have my father know it.

Trueman. That's impossible.

Maria. What's the sum? 60

Trueman. 'Tis considerable. I've marked it here, to show it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Maria. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that, and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father? 67

Trueman. Nothing more easy. But can you intend it? Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin? Oh! 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's. Sure, Heaven in mercy to my friend inspired the generous thought! 73

Maria. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. —But how shall he be found?

Trueman. Trust to my diligence for that. In the meantime, I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it that the real cause shall never be suspected. 81

Maria. In attempting to save from shame one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to Heaven and you, the judges of this action, I appeal, whether I have done anything misbecoming my sex and character.

Trueman. Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

Maria. If Heaven succeed it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's slightest breath; and therefore as

this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him! *Exeunt* 94

Scene IV. Millwood's *house*

Lucy *and* Blunt

Lucy. Well! what do you think of Millwood's conduct now?

Blunt. I own it is surprising; I don't know which to admire most, her feigned or his real passion—tho' I have sometimes been afraid that her avarice would discover her. But his youth and want of experience make it the easier to impose on him. 8

Lucy. No, it is his love. To do him justice, notwithstanding his youth, he don't want understanding; but you men are much easier imposed on in these affairs than your vanity will allow you to believe. Let me see the wisest of you all as much in love with me as Barnwell is with Millwood, and I'll engage to make as great a fool of him. 16

Blunt. And all circumstances considered, to make as much money of him too?

Lucy. I can't answer for that. Her artifice in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue in that course, astonish even me, who know her so well. 23

Blunt. But then, you are to consider that the money was his master's.

Lucy. There was the difficulty of it. Had it been his own, it had been nothing. Were the world his, she might have it for a smile. —But those golden days are done; he's ruined, and Millwood's hopes of farther profits there are at an end. 31

Blunt. That's no more than we all expected.

Lucy. Being called by his master to make up his accounts, he was forced to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment. 37

Blunt. I have not heard of this before! How did she receive him?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wondered what he meant; was astonished at his impudence; and, with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance. 45

Blunt. That's much, indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

Lucy. He grieved, and, at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone; and, making toward the door, showed a bag of money which he had stol'n from his master—the last he's ever like to have from thence. 53

Blunt. But then Millwood?

Lucy. Aye, she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling. Hung on his neck, and wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest, till the easy fool, melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false. 61

Blunt. Strange infatuation!

Lucy. But what followed was stranger still. As doubts and fears, followed by reconcilement, ever increase love where the passion is sincere, so in him it caused so wild a transport of excessive fondness, such joy, such grief, such pleasure, and such anguish, that nature in him seemed sinking with the weight, and the charmed soul disposed to quit his breast for hers. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise what I tremble but to think on. 76

Blunt. I am amazed! What can it be?

Lucy. You will be more so, to hear it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation and best benefactor. 80

Blunt. His uncle, whom we have often heard him speak of as a gentleman of a large estate and fair character in the country where he lives? 84

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin, but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demands this horrid sacrifice—Barnwell's near relation; and unsuspected virtue must give too easy means to seize the good man's

treasure, whose blood must seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears. 93

BLUNT. Is it possible she could persuade him to do an act like that? He is, by nature, honest, grateful, compassionate, and generous; and though his love and her artful persuasions have wrought him to practise what he most abhors, yet we all can witness for him with what reluctance he has still complied! So many tears he shed o'er each offence, as might, if possible, sanctify theft, and make a merit of a crime. 103

LUCY. 'Tis true; at the naming the murder of his uncle he started into rage, and, breaking from her arms, where she till then had held him with well-dissembled love and false endearments, called her "cruel monster, devil," and told her she was born for his destruction. She thought it not for her purpose to meet his rage with rage, but affected a most passionate fit of grief—railed at her fate and cursed her wayward stars, that still her wants should force her to press him to act such deeds as she must needs abhor as well as he: but told him, necessity had no law, and love no bounds; that therefore he never truly loved, but meant, in her necessity, to forsake her; then kneeled, and swore that since, by his refusal, he had given her cause to doubt his love, she never would see him more—unless, to prove it true, he robbed his uncle to supply her wants, and murdered him to keep it from discovery.

BLUNT. I am astonished! What said he?

LUCY. Speechless he stood; but in his face you might have read that various passions tore his very soul. Oft he, in anguish, threw his eyes towards heaven, and then as often bent their beams on her; then wept and groaned, and beat his breast. At length, with horror, not to be expressed, he cried: "Thou cursed fair! have I not given dreadful proofs of love? What drew me from my youthful innocence, to stain my then unspotted soul, but love? What caused me to rob my gentle master, but cursed love? What makes me now a fugitive from his service, loathed by myself, and scorned by all the world, but love? What fills my eyes with tears, my soul with torture never felt on this side death before? Why, love, love, love! And why, above all, do I resolve" (for, tearing his hair, he cried "I do resolve") "to kill my uncle?"

BLUNT. Was she not moved? It makes me weep to hear the sad relation. 146

LUCY. Yes, with joy, that she had gained her point. She gave him no time to cool, but urged him to attempt it instantly. He's now gone; if he performs it and escapes, there's more money for her; if not, he'll ne'er return, and then she's fairly rid of him. 152

BLUNT. 'Tis time the world was rid of such a monster.

LUCY. If we don't do our endeavors to prevent this murder, we are as bad as she.

BLUNT. I'm afraid it is too late. 157

LUCY. Perhaps not.—Her barbarity to Barnwell makes me hate her. We've run too great a length with her already. I did not think her or myself so wicked as I find, upon reflection, we are. 162

BLUNT. 'Tis true, we have all been too much so. But there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing when compared to that. I would not be involved in the guilt of that for all the world.

LUCY. Nor I, Heaven knows; therefore, let us clear ourselves by doing all that is in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way that, to me, seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this curs'd design?

BLUNT. With all my heart. How else shall I clear myself? He who knows of a murder intended to be committed and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason is a murderer. 177

LUCY. Let us lose no time; I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. *Exeunt*

SCENE V. *A walk at some distance from a country seat*

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. A dismal gloom obscures the face of day; either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journeys down the west of

heaven with more than common speed to avoid the sight of what I'm doomed to act. Since I set forth on this accursed design, where'er I tread, methinks, the solid earth trembles beneath my feet. Yonder limpid stream, whose hoary fall has made a natural cascade, as I passed by, in doleful accents seemed to murmur "Murder." The earth, the air, and water, seem concerned—but that's not strange; the world is punished, and nature feels the shock when Providence permits a good man's fall!—Just Heaven! Then what should I be?—for him that was my father's only brother, and since his death has been to me a father, who took me up an infant, and an orphan; reared me with tenderest care, and still indulged me with most paternal fondness. Yet here I stand avowed his destined murderer.—I stiffen with horror at my own impiety.—'Tis yet unperformed. What if I quit my bloody purpose, and fly the place! (*Going, then stops*)—But whither, O whither, shall I fly? My master's once-friendly doors are ever shut against me; and without money Millwood will never see me more, and life is not to be endured without her. She's got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there with such despotic sway—aye, there's the cause of all my sin and sorrow! 'Tis more than love; 'tis the fever of the soul and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft, and murder. O Conscience! feeble guide to Virtue, who only shows us when we go astray, but wants the power to stop us in our course! —Ha, in yonder shady walk I see my uncle. He's alone. Now for my disguise! (*Plucks out a vizor*) This is his hour of private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for heaven, whilst I—but what have I to do with heaven? Ha! No struggles, Conscience!

Hence, hence, Remorse, and ev'ry thought that's good: 47
The storms that lust began must end in blood.

(*Puts on the vizor, draws a pistol and exit*)

Scene VI. *A close walk in a wood*

Uncle

Uncle. If I [were][1] superstitious, I should fear some danger lurked unseen, or death were nigh. A heavy melancholy clouds my spirits; my imagination is filled with gashly forms of dreary graves and bodies changed by death, when the pale, lengthened visage attracts each weeping eye, and fills the musing soul, at once, with grief and horror, pity and aversion.—I will indulge the thought. The wise man prepares himself for death, by making it familiar to his mind. When strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future selves, how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view? The mind scarce moves; the blood, curdling and chilled, creeps slowly thro' the veins—fixed, still, and motionless, like the solemn object of our thoughts. We are almost at present what we must be hereafter, till curiosity awakes the soul and sets it on inquiry. 21

Scene VII

Uncle. George Barnwell *at a distance*

Uncle. O Death, thou strange mysterious power—seen every day, yet never understood but by the incommunicative dead—what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that world's exotic finds, or thinks it finds—thy thick clouds attempts to pass in vain, lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom; defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labor lost. 12

(*During this speech*, Barnwell *sometimes presents the pistol and draws it back again; at last he drops it, at which his uncle starts and draws his sword*)

Barnwell. Oh, 'tis impossible!

1 Q1 *was.*

UNCLE. A man so near me, armed and masked!

BARNWELL. Nay, then there's no retreat. (*Plucks a poniard from his bosom, and stabs him*)

UNCLE. Oh! I am slain! All-gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant! Bless, with thy choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy!

(BARNWELL *throws off his mask, runs to him, and, kneeling by him, raises and chafes him*)

BARNWELL. Expiring saint! Oh, murdered, martyred uncle! Lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer! Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me! Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die!—By heaven, he weeps in pity of my woes. Tears,—tears, for blood! The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer.—Oh, speak your pious purpose—pronounce my pardon then—and take me with you!—He would, but cannot. Oh, why, with such fond affection, do you press my murdering hand?—What! will you kiss me? (*Kisses him.* Uncle *groans and dies*) He's gone forever—and oh! I follow. (*Swoons away upon his uncle's dead body*) —Do I still live to press the suffering bosom of the earth? Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air? Let Heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy, now look down on that dear murdered saint and me the murderer. And, if his vengeance spares, let pity strike and end my wretched being!—Murder the worst of crimes, and parricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides! Cain, who stands on record from the birth of time, and must to its last final period, as accursed, slew a brother favored above him. Detested Nero by another's hand dispatched a mother that he feared and hated. But I, with my own hand, have murdered a brother, mother, father, and a friend most loving and beloved. This execrable act of mine's without a parallel. Oh, may it ever stand alone—the last of murders, as it is the worst!

The rich man thus, in torment and despair,
Preferred his vain but charitable prayer.
The fool, his own soul lost, would fain be wise
For others' good; but Heaven his suit denies.
By laws and means well known we stand or fall,
And one eternal rule remains for all.

[*Exit*]

ACT IV

SCENE I. [*A room in* THOROWGOOD'S *house*]

MARIA

MARIA. How falsely do they judge who censure or applaud, as we're afflicted or rewarded here! I know I am unhappy, yet cannot charge myself with any crime more than the common frailties of our kind, that should provoke just Heaven to mark me out for sufferings so uncommon and severe. Falsely to accuse ourselves, Heaven must abhor; then it is just and right that innocence should suffer, for Heaven must be just in all its ways. Perhaps by that they are kept from moral evils much worse than penal, or more improved in virtue; or may not the lesser ills that they sustain be the means of greater good to others? Might all the joyless days and sleepless nights that I have passed but purchase peace for thee—

Thou dear, dear cause of all my grief and pain,
Small were the loss, and infinite the gain;
Tho' to the grave in secret love I pine,
So life and fame and happiness were thine.

SCENE II

[*Enter* TRUEMAN]

TRUEMAN *and* MARIA

MARIA. What news of Barnwell?

TRUEMAN. None. I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

MARIA. Doth my father yet suspect the cause of his absenting himself? 5

TRUEMAN. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should; but his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father's wise; and, though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make for Barnwell, yet I am afraid he regards 'em only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment. 13

MARIA. How does the unhappy youth defeat all our designs to serve him! Yet I can never repent what we have done. Should he return, 'twill make his reconciliation with my father easier, and preserve him from future reproach from a malicious, unforgiving world. 20

SCENE III

[*Enter*] *to them* THOROWGOOD *and* LUCY

THOROWGOOD. This woman here has given me a sad, and (bating some circumstances) too probable account of Barnwell's defection.

LUCY. I am sorry, sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion. 7

THOROWGOOD. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. (*To them*) Among many other particulars, she informs me that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me at several times of considerable sums of money; now, as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed. 16

MARIA. Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indisposed, that I must retire. —(*Aside*) Providence opposes all attempts to save him. Poor ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria! *Exit* 21

SCENE IV

THOROWGOOD, TRUEMAN *and* LUCY

THOROWGOOD. How am I distressed on every side! Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valued friend—and then my child, the only joy and hope of my declining life! Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss.—O Trueman! this person informs me that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle. 10

TRUEMAN. Oh, execrable deed! I am blasted with the horror of the thought.

LUCY. This delay may ruin all.

THOROWGOOD. What to do or think I know not. That he ever wronged me, I know is false; the rest may be so too—there's all my hope. 17

TRUEMAN. Trust not to that; rather suppose all true than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid[1] deed may be a doing—dreadful imagination! Or it may be done, and we are vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past. 23

THOROWGOOD. (*Aside*) This earnestness convinces me that he knows more than he has yet discovered.[2]—What ho! without there! who waits? 27

SCENE V

[*Enter*] *to them a* Servant

THOROWGOOD. Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse and prepare himself to set out with speed! An affair of life and death demands his diligence.

Exit Servant

SCENE VI

THOROWGOOD, TRUEMAN *and* LUCY

THOROWGOOD. [*To* LUCY] For you, whose behavior on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your farther assistance. Return and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible. 6

Exit LUCY

1 horrible. 2 revealed.

Scene VII

Thorowgood *and* Trueman

Thorowgood. Trueman, you, I am sure, would not be idle on this occasion. *Exit*

Scene VIII

Trueman

Trueman. He only who is a friend can judge of my distress. *Exit*

Scene IX. [*A room in*] Millwood's *house*

Millwood

Millwood. I wish I knew the event of his design; the attempt without success would ruin him.—Well! what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, in pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before.—Suppose the deed done: then, and then only, I shall be secure. Or what if he returns without attempting it at all? 10

Scene X

Millwood, *and* Barnwell, *bloody*

Millwood. But he is here, and I have done him wrong; his bloody hands show he has done the deed, but show he wants the prudence to conceal it. 4

Barnwell. Where shall I hide me? whither shall I fly to avoid the swift, unerring hand of Justice?

Millwood. Dismiss those fears. Tho' thousands had pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you are safe as innocence. I have such a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of Jealousy and Revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you if any danger's near. 15

Barnwell. Oh, hide me from myself if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, tho' I were hid where man's eye never saw nor light e'er dawned, 'twere all in vain. For that inmate—that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood! Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue. 26

Millwood. Ridiculous! Then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or, what's less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barnwell. Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can we hide from Heav'n's omniscient eye? 32

Millwood. No more of this stuff! What advantage have you made of his death? or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure—those no doubt were about him. What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me? 39

Barnwell. Think you I added sacrilege to murder? Oh! had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name of nephew and of murderer! Alas, alas! he knew not then that his nephew was his murderer. How would you have wished, as I did, tho' you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour! But, being dead,[1] I fled the sight of what my hands had done, nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated by theft his sacred corpse. 53

Millwood. Whining, preposterous, canting villain, to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury—then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt! Do you think I'll hazard my reputation—nay, my life, to entertain you? 61

Barnwell. Oh! Millwood! this from thee!—But I have done; if you hate me, if

1 Absolute use with ellipsis of the pronoun.

you wish me dead, then are you happy—for oh! 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

MILLWOOD. [*Aside*] In his madness he will discover all and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice from whence there's no retreat for both—then to preserve myself. (*Pauses*) There is no other way,—'tis dreadful; but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. It must be done. (*Stamps*) 73

SCENE XI

[*Enter*] *to them a* Servant

MILLWOOD. Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain: he has confessed himself a murderer. Should I let him escape, I justly might be thought as bad as he.

Exit Servant

SCENE XII

MILLWOOD *and* BARNWELL

BARNWELL. O Millwood! sure thou dost not, cannot mean it. Stop the messenger! Upon my knees I beg you, call him back! 'Tis fit I die indeed, but not by you. I will this instant deliver myself into the hands of justice; indeed I will, for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture. 9

MILLWOOD. Call it what you will, I am willing to live, and live secure—which nothing but your death can warrant.

BARNWELL. If there be a pitch of wickedness that seats the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me but a dismal dungeon, hard-galling fetters, an awful trial, and ignominious death—justly to fall unpitied and abhorred? after death to be suspended between heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle, the warning and horror of a gaping crowd! This I could bear—nay, wish not to avoid, had it come from any hand but thine. 23

SCENE XIII

MILLWOOD *and* BARNWELL. [*Enter*] BLUNT, Officer *and* Attendants

MILLWOOD. Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer? Here, sir; take this youth into your custody. I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge. 4

(*They seize him*)

BARNWELL. To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her: the hand of Heav'n is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide. Yet Heav'n, that justly cuts me off, still suffers her to live, perhaps to punish others. Tremendous mercy! so fiends are cursed with immortality, to be the executioners of Heaven.— 12

Be warned, ye youths, who see my sad despair,
Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair;
By reason guided, honest joys pursue; 15
The fair, to honor and to virtue true,
Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you.
By my example learn to shun my fate;
(How wretched is the man who's wise too late!) 19
Ere innocence, and fame, and life, be lost,
Here purchase wisdom, cheaply, at my cost!

Exit with Officers

SCENE XIV

MILLWOOD *and* BLUNT

MILLWOOD. Where's Lucy? Why is she absent at such a time?

BLUNT. Would I had been so too, thou devil!

MILLWOOD. Insolent! This to me! 5

BLUNT. The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin and then betrays to punishment. *Exit*

SCENE XV

MILLWOOD

MILLWOOD. They disapprove of my conduct, and mean to take this opportunity to

set up for themselves. My ruin is resolved. I see my danger, but scorn both it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments. (*Going*)

Scene XVI

[*Enter* Thorowgood]

Thorowgood *and* Millwood

Thorowgood. Where is this scandal of her own sex and curse of ours?

Millwood. What means this insolence? Who do you seek?

Thorowgood. Millwood.

Millwood. Well, you have found her then. I am Millwood.

Thorowgood. Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld.

Millwood. From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation, but your manners belie your aspect.—What is your business here? I know you not.

Thorowgood. Hereafter you may know me better; I am Barnwell's master.

Millwood. Then you are master to a villain—which, I think, is not much to your credit.

Thorowgood. Had he been as much above thy arts as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not blush to own him.

Millwood. My arts? I don't understand you, sir. If he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or yours? You should have taught him better.

Thorowgood. Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arrived to such a height of wickedness? When innocence is banished, modesty soon follows. —Know, sorceress, I'm not ignorant of any of your arts, by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived and, by your curs'd wiles, even forced him to commit—and then betrayed him.

Millwood. (*Aside*) Ha! Lucy has got the advantage of me, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost.

Thorowgood. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished as the law directs, is all that now remains.—Poor satisfaction! for he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too. But Heaven, who knows our frame and graciously distinguishes between frailty and presumption, will make a difference, tho' man cannot, who sees not the heart, but only judges by the outward action.

Millwood. I find, sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprised at such ill treatment from a gentleman of your appearance, without cause, and therefore too hastily returned it; for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and, some way or other, accessory to his undoing.

Thorowgood. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause, of all his guilt and all his suffering—of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Millwood. 'Tis very strange! But who's secure from scandal and detraction?—So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since that fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true, I have a servant, on whose account he has of late frequented my house; if she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Hasn't Barnwell done the same by you?

Thorowgood. I hear you; pray, go on!

Millwood. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him; but I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder, to supply her extravagancies? It must be so; I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her and a man-servant that I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, sir, you will

lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed. (*Offers to go*) 91

THOROWGOOD. Madam, you pass not this way! I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

MILLWOOD. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime! 99

THOROWGOOD. I do—and of betraying him when it was done.

MILLWOOD. That which you call betraying him, may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, tho' she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with the horror of his crimes, have done. 107

THOROWGOOD. (*Aside*) How should an unexperienced youth escape her snares? The powerful magic of her wit and form might betray the wisest to simple dotage, and fire the blood that age had froze long since. Even I, that with just prejudice came prepared, had, by her artful story, been deceived, but that my strong conviction of her guilt makes even a doubt impossible. [*To* MILLWOOD] Those whom subtilely you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, what proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to have prevented it. 122

MILLWOOD. Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have such a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objections. *Exit*

SCENE XVII

THOROWGOOD. [*Enter*] LUCY, TRUEMAN, BLUNT, Officers, *etc.*

LUCY. Gentlemen, pray, place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you.—This way! (*To* THOROWGOOD) and note her behavior. I have observed her; she's driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design. 8

SCENE XVIII

[*Enter*] *to them* MILLWOOD *with a pistol.* TRUEMAN *secures her*

TRUEMAN. Here thy power of doing mischief ends, deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

MILLWOOD. Fool, hypocrite, villain—man! Thou canst not call me that. 4

TRUEMAN. To call thee woman were to wrong the sex, thou devil!

MILLWOOD. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected—a mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness and that of all mankind. 10

TRUEMAN. Think not by aggravating the fault of others to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least! 14

MILLWOOD. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of 'em ere I knew their worth, then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependence and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw, secured the worst of men from both. I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked; be it so! They were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal. 28

THOROWGOOD. Sure, none but the worst of men conversed with thee.

MILLWOOD. Men of all degrees and all professions I have known, yet found no difference but in their several capacities; all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power. In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty and revenge, the reverend priesthood were my unerring guides. From suburb-magistrates, who live by ruined reputations, as the unhospitable natives of Cornwall do by shipwrecks, I learned that to charge my innocent

neighbors with my crimes, was to merit their protection; for to screen the guilty, is the less scandalous when many are suspected, and detraction, like darkness and death, blackens all objects and levels all distinction. Such are your venal magistrates, who favor none but such as, by their office, they are sworn to punish. With them, not to be guilty is the worst of crimes, and large fees privately paid is every needful virtue. 50

THOROWGOOD. Your practice has sufficiently discovered your contempt of laws, both human and divine; no wonder then that you should hate the officers of both.

MILLWOOD. I hate you all! I know you, and expect no mercy. Nay, I ask for none; I have done nothing that I am sorry for. I followed my inclinations, and that the best of you does every day. All actions are alike natural and indifferent to man and beast, who devour, or are devoured, as they meet with others weaker or stronger than themselves.

THOROWGOOD. What pity it is, a mind so comprehensive, daring, and inquisitive, should be a stranger to religion's sweet, but powerful, charms! 66

MILLWOOD. I am not fool enough to be an atheist, tho' I have known enough of men's hypocrisy to make a thousand simple women so. Whatever religion is in itself—as practised by mankind, it has caused the evils you say it was designed to cure. War, plague, and famine, has not destroyed so many of the human race as this pretended piety has done, and with such barbarous cruelty—as if the only way to honor Heaven, were to turn the present world into hell.

THOROWGOOD. Truth is truth, tho' from an enemy and spoke in malice. You bloody, blind, and superstitious bigots, how will you answer this? 81

MILLWOOD. What are your laws, of which you make your boast, but the fool's wisdom and the coward's valor—the instrument and screen of all your villainies, by which you punish in others what you act yourselves, or would have acted had you been in their circumstances? The judge who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor. Thus you go on deceiving and being deceived, harassing, and plaguing, and destroying one another: but women are your universal prey. 93

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,
With cruel arts you labor to destroy;
A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
O may, from hence, each violated maid,
By flatt'ring, faithless, barb'rous man betrayed, 99
When robbed of innocence, and virgin fame,
From your destruction raise a nobler name;
To right their sex's wrongs devote their mind,
And future Millwoods prove, to plague mankind! [*Exeunt*]

ACT V

SCENE I. *A room in a prison*

THOROWGOOD, BLUNT *and* LUCY

THOROWGOOD. I have recommended to Barnwell a reverend divine, whose judgment and integrity I am well acquainted with. Nor has Millwood been neglected; but she, unhappy woman, still obstinate, refuses his assistance. 6

LUCY. This pious charity to the afflicted well becomes your character; yet pardon me, sir, if I wonder you were not at their trial.

THOROWGOOD. I knew it was impossible to save him, and I and my family bear so great a part in his distress, that to have been present would have aggravated our sorrows without relieving his. 14

BLUNT. It was mournful, indeed. Barnwell's youth and modest deportment, as he passed, drew tears from every eye. When placed at the bar and arraigned before the reverend judges, with many tears and interrupting sobs he confessed and aggravated his offences, without accusing or once reflecting on Millwood, the shameless author of his ruin—who, dauntless and unconcerned, stood by his side, viewing with visible pride and contempt the vast assembly, who all with sympathizing sorrow wept for the wretched

youth. Millwood, when called upon to answer, loudly insisted upon her innocence, and made an artful and a bold defence; but, finding all in vain, the impartial jury and the learned bench concurring to find her guilty, how did she curse herself, poor Barnwell, us, her judges, all mankind! But what could that avail? She was condemned, and is this day to suffer with him.

THOROWGOOD. The time draws on. I am going to visit Barnwell, as you are Millwood.

LUCY. We have not wronged her; yet I dread this interview. She's proud, impatient, wrathful, and unforgiving. To be the branded instruments of vengeance, to suffer in her shame and sympathise with her in all she suffers, is the tribute we must pay for our former ill-spent lives and long confederacy with her in wickedness.

THOROWGOOD. Happy for you it ended when it did! What you have done against Millwood, I know proceeded from a just abhorrence of her crimes, free from interest, malice, or revenge. Proselytes to virtue should be encouraged. Pursue your proposed reformation, and know me hereafter for your friend.

LUCY. This is a blessing as unhoped for as unmerited; but Heaven, that snatched us from impending ruin, sure intends you as its instrument to secure us from apostasy.

THOROWGOOD. With gratitude to impute your deliverance to Heaven, is just. Many, less virtuously disposed than Barnwell was, have never fallen in the manner he has done; may not such owe their safety rather to Providence than to themselves? With pity and compassion let us judge him! Great were his faults, but strong was the temptation. Let his ruin learn[1] us diffidence, humanity, and circumspection; for we, who wonder at his fate—perhaps, had we like him been tried, like him we had fallen too. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. *A dungeon. A table and lamp*

BARNWELL, *reading*. [*Enter*] THOROWGOOD

THOROWGOOD. See there the bitter fruits of passion's detested reign and sensual appetite indulged—severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

BARNWELL. My honored, injured master, whose goodness has covered me a thousand times with shame, forgive this last unwilling disrespect! Indeed, I saw you not.

THOROWGOOD. 'Tis well; I hope you were better employed in viewing of yourself. Your journey's long, your time for preparation almost spent. I sent a reverend divine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

BARNWELL. The word of truth, which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I labored under. From thence I've learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, tho' great, are not unpardonable; and that 'tis not my interest only, but my duty, to believe and to rejoice in that hope: so shall Heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

THOROWGOOD. Go on! How happy am I who live to see this!

BARNWELL. 'Tis wonderful that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience! But truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice. I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

THOROWGOOD. These are the genuine signs of true repentance, the only preparatory certain way to everlasting peace.—Oh, the joy it gives to see a soul formed and prepared for Heaven! For this the faithful minister devotes himself to meditation, abstinence, and prayer, shunning the vain delights of sensual joys, and daily dies that others may live forever. For this he turns the sacred volumes o'er, and spends his life in painful search of truth. The love of riches and the lust of power, he looks on with just contempt and detestation, who only counts for wealth the souls he wins, and whose highest ambition

[1] teach.

is to serve mankind. If the reward of all his pains be to preserve one soul from wandering, or turn one from the error of his ways, how does he then rejoice, and own his little labors overpaid!

BARNWELL. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But tho' I cannot, Heaven can and will reward you.

THOROWGOOD. To see thee thus is joy too great for words. Farewell! Heaven strengthen thee! Farewell!

BARNWELL. O sir, there's something I could say if my sad, swelling heart would give me leave.

THOROWGOOD. Give it vent a while and try.

BARNWELL. I had a friend—'tis true I am unworthy, yet methinks your generous example might persuade—could I not see him once before I go from whence there's no return?

THOROWGOOD. He's coming, and as much thy friend as ever. [*Aside*] But I'll not anticipate his sorrow; too soon he'll see the sad effect of this contagious ruin.—This torrent of domestic misery bears too hard upon me; I must retire to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome.—Much loved and much lamented youth, farewell! Heaven strengthen thee! Eternally farewell!

BARNWELL. The best of masters and of men, farewell! While I live, let me not want your prayers!

THOROWGOOD. Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with Heaven, Death's already vanquished; bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain forever. *Exit*

SCENE III

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. I find a power within that bears my soul above the fears of death, and, spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal.

SCENE IV

[*Enter*] *to him* TRUEMAN *and the* Keeper

KEEPER. Sir, there's the prisoner.

Exit

SCENE V

BARNWELL *and* TRUEMAN

BARNWELL. Trueman—my friend, whom I so wished to see! Yet now he's here I dare not look upon him. (*Weeps*)

TRUEMAN. O Barnwell! Barnwell!

BARNWELL. Mercy, mercy, gracious Heaven! For death, but not for this, was I prepared.

TRUEMAN. What have I suffered since I saw you last! What pain has absence given me!—But oh! to see thee thus!

BARNWELL. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul—but I was born to murder all who love me.

(*Both weep*)

TRUEMAN. I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort. But I'm deceived, for I have none to give. I came to share thy sorrow, but cannot bear my own.

BARNWELL. My sense of guilt, indeed, you cannot know—'tis what the good and innocent, like you, can ne'er conceive. But other griefs at present I have none but what I feel for you. In your sorrow I read you love me still. But yet methinks 'tis strange, when I consider what I am.

TRUEMAN. No more of that! I can remember nothing but thy virtues, thy honest, tender friendship, our former happy state, and present misery.—Oh, had you trusted me when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

BARNWELL. Alas, thou know'st not what a wretch I've been! Breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted to the author of my ruin, that, had she insisted on my murdering thee, I think I should have done it.

TRUEMAN. Prithee, aggravate thy faults no more!

BARNWELL. I think I should! Thus, good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

TRUEMAN. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms!

BARNWELL. Never! never will I taste such joys on earth; never will I so soothe my just

remorse! Are those honest arms and faithful bosom fit to embrace and to support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and flinty pavement bear me (*Throwing himself on the ground*)—even these too good for such a bloody monster.

TRUEMAN. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low but love will find thee. (*Lies down by him*) Upon this rugged couch then let us lie; for well it suits our most deplorable condition. Here will we offer to stern calamity, this earth the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice! Our mutual groans shall echo to each other thro' the dreary vault. Our sighs shall number the moments as they pass, and mingling tears communicate such anguish as words were never made to express.

BARNWELL. Then be it so! Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine! (*Embracing*) Where's now the anguish that you promised? You've taken mine and make me no return. Sure, peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow can't approach me while I'm here! This too is the work of Heaven, who, having before spoke peace and pardon to me, now sends thee to confirm it. Oh, take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast!

TRUEMAN. I do, I do. Almighty Power, how have you made us capable to bear, at once, the extremes of pleasure and of pain!

SCENE VI

[*Enter*] *to them the* Keeper

KEEPER. Sir!

TRUEMAN. I come. *Exit* Keeper

SCENE VII

BARNWELL *and* TRUEMAN

BARNWELL. Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us forever.

TRUEMAN. O my Barnwell, there's yet another task behind; again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

BARNWELL. To meet and part with you, I thought was all I had to do on earth! What is there more for me to do or suffer?

TRUEMAN. I dread to tell thee; yet it must be known!—Maria—

BARNWELL. Our master's fair and virtuous daughter?

TRUEMAN. The same.

BARNWELL. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that lovely maid! Preserve her, Heaven, from every ill, to show mankind that goodness is your care!

TRUEMAN. Thy, thy misfortunes, my unhappy friend, have reached her. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

BARNWELL. (*Aside*) I know he doth abhor a lie and would not trifle with his dying friend. This is, indeed, the bitterness of death!

TRUEMAN. You must remember, for we all observed it, for some time past a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown till, hearing of your dreadful fate, the long stifled flame blazed out. She wept, she wrung her hands, and tore her hair, and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state whilst she lamented yours.

BARNWELL. Will all the pain I feel restore thy ease, lovely, unhappy maid? (*Weeping*) Why didn't you let me die and never know it?

TRUEMAN. It was impossible; she makes no secret of her passion for you, and is determined to see you ere you die. She waits for me to introduce her. *Exit*

SCENE VIII

BARNWELL

BARNWELL. Vain, busy thoughts, be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been? I now am—what I've made myself.

SCENE IX

[*Enter*] *to him* TRUEMAN *and* MARIA

TRUEMAN. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of

misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to shameful death. 5

MARIA. To this sad place, then, no improper guest, the abandoned, lost Maria brings despair—and see the subject and the cause of all this world of woe! Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode and the lifeless form alone was left behind—yet that so perfect that beauty and death, ever at enmity, now seem united there. 14

BARNWELL. I groan but murmur not. Just Heaven, I am your own; do with me what you please.

MARIA. Why are your streaming eyes still fixed below, as tho' thou'dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you pleased; but in your misery I must and will partake! 23

BARNWELL. Oh! say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate! Consider what you are—how vast your fortune, and how bright your fame; have pity on your youth, your beauty, and unequalled virtue, for which so many noble peers have sighed in vain! Bless with your charms some honorable lord! Adorn with your beauty and by your example improve the English court, that justly claims such merit; so shall I quickly be to you as though I had never been. 35

MARIA. When I forget you, I must be so, indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women like Millwood, if there be more such women, smile in prosperity and in adversity forsake! Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made. 42

TRUEMAN. Lovely, ill-fated maid! Was there ever such generous distress before? How must this pierce his grateful heart, and aggravate his woes! 46

BARNWELL. Ere I knew guilt or shame—when Fortune smiled, and when my youthful hopes were at the highest—if then to have raised my thoughts to you had been presumption in me, never to have been pardoned, think how much beneath yourself you condescend, to regard me now! 53

MARIA. Let her blush who, professing love, invades the freedom of your sex's choice, and meanly sues in hopes of a return! Your inevitable fate hath rendered hope impossible as vain. Then why should I fear to avow a passion so just and so disinterested?

TRUEMAN. If any should take occasion from Millwood's crimes to libel the best and fairest part of the creation, here let them see their error! The most distant hopes of such a tender passion from so bright a maid might add to the happiness of the most happy, and make the greatest proud. Yet here 'tis lavished in vain: tho' by the rich present, the generous donor is undone, he on whom it is bestowed receives no benefit. 69

BARNWELL. So the aromatic spices of the East, which all the living covet and esteem, are, with unavailing kindness, wasted on the dead. 73

MARIA. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approaching death—from such a death? Oh, terrible idea! What is her misery and distress, who sees the first, last object of her love, for whom alone she'd live—for whom she'd die a thousand, thousand deaths, if it were possible—expiring in her arms? Yet she is happy when compared to me. Were millions of worlds mine, I'd gladly give them in exchange for her condition. The most consummate woe is light to mine. The last of curses to other miserable maids is all I ask, and that's denied me.

TRUEMAN. Time and reflection cure all ills. 89

MARIA. All but this; his dreadful catastrophe, Virtue herself abhors. To give a holiday to suburb slaves, and passing entertain the savage herd who, elbowing each other for a sight, pursue and press upon him like his fate! A mind with piety and resolution armed, may smile on death. But public ignominy, everlasting shame,—shame, the death of souls—to die a thousand times, and yet survive even death itself, in never-dying infamy—is this to be endured? Can

I, who live in him, and must, each hour of my devoted life, feel all these woes renewed —can I endure this?

TRUEMAN. Grief has impaired her spirits; she pants as in the agonies of death.

BARNWELL. Preserve her, Heaven, and restore her peace; nor let her death be added to my crime! (*Bell tolls*) I am summoned to my fate.

SCENE X

[*Enter*] *to them the* Keeper

KEEPER. The officers attend you, sir. Mrs. Millwood is already summoned.

BARNWELL. Tell 'em, I'm ready.—And now, my friend, farewell! (*Embracing*) Support and comfort the best you can this mourning fair.—No more! Forget not to pray for me!—(*Turning to* MARIA) Would you, bright excellence, permit me the honor of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give were mine. (*She inclines toward him; they embrace*) Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from earth, and me, to heaven, where virtue like yours is ever heard. Pray for the peace of my departing soul! Early my race of wickedness began, and soon has reached the summit. Ere nature has finished her work and stamped me man—just at the time that others begin to stray—my course is finished. Tho' short my span of life, and few my days, yet count my crimes for years, and I have lived whole ages. Justice and mercy are in heaven the same: its utmost severity is mercy to the whole, thereby to cure man's folly and presumption, which else would render even infinite mercy vain and ineffectual. Thus Justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me, by one such example to secure thousands from future ruin.

If any youth, like you, in future times,
Shall mourn my fate, tho' he abhor my crimes;
Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;
To each such melting eye and throbbing heart
Would gracious Heaven this benefit impart—
Never to know my guilt nor feel my pain.
Then must you own, you ought not to complain;
Since you nor weep, nor shall I die, in vain.

[*Exeunt*]

[CURTAIN]

SCENE XI. [*The prison yard*]

Enter TRUEMAN *to* BLUNT *and* LUCY

LUCY. Heart-breaking sight! O wretched, wretched Millwood!

TRUEMAN. You came from her, then; how is she disposed to meet her fate?

BLUNT. Who can describe unalterable woe?

LUCY. She goes to death encompassed with horror—loathing life, and yet afraid to die. No tongue can tell her anguish and despair.

TRUEMAN. Heaven be better to her than her fears! May she prove a warning to others, a monument of mercy in herself!

LUCY. Oh, sorrow insupportable! Break, break, my heart!

TRUEMAN. In vain

With bleeding hearts and weeping eyes we show
A human, gen'rous sense of others' woe,
Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,
And, by avoiding that, prevent our own.

FINIS

EPILOGUE

WRITTEN BY COLLEY CIBBER, ESQ., AND SPOKE BY MRS. CIBBER

Since Fate has robbed me of the hopeless youth
For whom my heart had hoarded up its truth,
By all the laws of love and honor, now
I'm free again to choose—and one of you.

But soft—with caution first I'll round me peep;
Maids, in my case, should look before they leap.

Here's choice enough, of various sorts and hue,
The cit, the wit, the rake cocked up in cue,
The fair, spruce mercer, and the tawny Jew.

Suppose I search the sober gallery—No,
There's none but prentices, and cuckolds all a row;
And these, I doubt, are those that make 'em so. (*Pointing to the boxes*)

'Tis very well, enjoy the jest! But you,
Fine, powdered sparks—nay, I'm told 'tis true—
Your happy spouses can make cuckolds too.

'Twixt you and them, the diff'rence this perhaps:
The cit's ashamed whene'er his duck he traps;
But you, when Madam's tripping, let her fall,
Cock up your hats, and take no shame at all.

What if some favored poet I could meet,
Whose love would lay his laurels at my feet?
No; painted passion real love abhors:
His flame would prove the suit of creditors.

Not to detain you, then, with longer pause,
In short, my heart to this conclusion draws:
I yield it to the hand that's loudest in applause.

DOUGLAS

A Tragedy by John Home

Non ego sum vates, sed prisci conscius aevi

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Lord Randolph
Glenalvon, [his kinsman]
[Old] Norval
Douglas, [Norval]
Stranger[1]
Servants

Women

Matilda, Lady Randolph
Anna, [her confidante]

[Place: *A Scottish castle and the vicinity*]

[Time: *about 1150*]

[DEDICATION]

To His Royal Highness, George, Prince of Wales

Sir,

In dedications, especially those which poets write, mankind expect to find little sentiment and less truth. A grateful imagination adorns its benefactor with every virtue, and even flatters with sincerity. Hence the portrait of each patron of the muses is drawn with the same outline and finished as a model of perfection. Instructed by the errors of others, I presume not to make the panegyric of the Prince of Wales, nor to extol the patronage of literature as the most shining quality of a prince. Your Royal Highness will permit me to mention one sort of patronage which can never be praised too much; that, I mean, which extending its influence to the whole society, forms and excites the genius of individuals by exalting the spirit of the State.

Institutions that revive, in a great and highly civilized people, those virtues of courage, manhood, and love of their country, which are most apt in the progress of refinement to decay, produce at the same time that pleasing and ornamental genius, which cannot subsist in a mind that does not partake of those qualities which it describes. This is an observation which has escaped the notice of the greater part of writers who have inquired into the causes of the growth and decay of poetry and eloquence; but it has not escaped the penetration of Longinus, who writing in the decline of the Roman Empire, and lamenting that the true sublime was not to be found in the works of his time, boldly imputes that defect to the change of policy; and enumerates with indignation the vices of avarice, effeminacy, and pusillanimity, which, arising from the loss of liberty, had so enthralled and debased the minds of men that they could not look up, as he calls it, to anything elevated and sublime: and here, as in other questions, the great critic quotes the authority of his master Homer: "The day of slavery bereaves a man of half his virtue." The experience of succeeding times has shown that genius is affected by changes less violent than the loss of liberty; that it ever flourishes in times of vigor and enterprise, and languishes amidst the sure corruption of an inactive age.

Your Royal Highness, as heir apparent of the British Empire, hath in view the noblest field that ever a laudable ambition entered. The envied state of this Nation cannot remain precisely as it is; the tide must flow, or ebb faster than it has ever flowed. A prince destined in such a period to reign, begins a memorable era of perfection or degeneracy. The serious cares and princely studies of your youth, the visible tenor of your generous and constant mind, have filled the breasts of all good men with hopes of you equal to their wishes. That these hopes may be

[1] For Douglas and Old Norval incognito.

fulfilled in their utmost extent, is the sincere and ardent prayer of

Your Royal Highness's
Most humble
Most obedient,
And most devoted Servant,
John Home

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. SPARKS

In ancient times, when Britain's trade was arms,
And the loved music of her youth, alarms;
A godlike race sustained fair England's fame:
Who has not heard of gallant Percy's[1] name?
Aye, and of Douglas? Such illustrious foes
In rival Rome and Carthage never rose!
From age to age bright shone the British fire,
And every hero was a hero's sire.
When powerful fate decreed one warrior's doom,
Up sprung the phœnix from his parent's tomb.
But whilst those generous rivals fought and fell,
Those generous rivals loved each other well:
Tho' many a bloody field was lost and won,
Nothing in hate, in honor all was done.
When Percy, wronged, defied his prince or peers,
Fast came the Douglas with his Scottish spears;
And, when proud Douglas made his King his foe,
For Douglas Percy bent his English bow.
Expelled their native homes by adverse fate,
They knocked alternate at each other's gate:
Then blazed the castle, at the midnight hour,
For him whose arms had shook its firmest tower.
This night a Douglas your protection claims;
A wife! a mother!—Pity's softest names.
The story of her woes indulgent hear,
And grant your suppliant all she begs, a tear.
In confidence she begs, and hopes to find
Each English breast, like noble Percy's, kind.

1 Q1 *Piercy.*

ACT I

SCENE I. *The court of a castle, surrounded with woods*

Enter LADY RANDOLPH

LADY RANDOLPH. Ye woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewell a while. I will not leave you long;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells
Who, from the chiding stream or groaning oak,
Still hears and answers to Matilda's moan.
O Douglas! Douglas! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,
Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals hear'st
My lamentation: hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.
My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn,
Who perished with thee on this fatal day.
To thee I lift my voice; to thee address
The plaint which mortal ear has never heard.
Oh, disregard me not; tho' I am called
Another's now, my heart is wholly thine.
Incapable of change, affection lies
Buried, my Douglas, in thy bloody grave.
But Randolph comes, whom Fate has made my lord,
To chide my anguish and defraud the dead.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH

LORD RANDOLPH. Again these weeds of woe! Say, dost thou well
To feed a passion which consumes thy life?
The living claim some duty; vainly thou
Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.
LADY RANDOLPH. Silent, alas! is he for whom I mourn:
Childless, without memorial of his name,
He only now in my remembrance lives.
LORD RANDOLPH. Time, that wears out the trace of deepest anguish,
Has passed o'er thee in vain. Would thou wert not
Composed of grief and tenderness alone!

Sure, thou art not the daughter of Sir Malcolm.
Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment:
For when thy brother fell, he smiled to hear
That Douglas' son in the same field was slain.
LADY RANDOLPH. Oh! rake not up the ashes of my fathers!
Implacable resentment was their crime,
And grievous has the expiation been.
Contending with the Douglas, gallant lives
Of either house were lost; my ancestors
Compelled, at last, to leave their ancient seat
On Tiviot's pleasant banks; and now, of them
No heir is left. Had they not been so stern,
I had not been the last of all my race.
LORD RANDOLPH. Thy grief wrests to its purposes my words.
I never asked of thee that ardent love
Which in the breasts of Fancy's children burns.
Decent affection and complacent kindness
Were all I wished for; but I wished in vain.
Hence with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land;
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
Matilda would not shed one tear the more.
LADY RANDOLPH. Thou dost not think so? woeful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues.
But whither go'st thou now?
LORD RANDOLPH. Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on the tip-toe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks
Each who arrives, if he is come to tell
The Danes are landed.
LADY RANDOLPH. Oh, may adverse winds,
Far from the coast of Scotland, drive their fleet!
And every soldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his pleasant home!
LORD RANDOLPH. Thou speak'st a woman's, hear a warrior's wish:
Right from their native land, the stormy north,
May the wind blow, till every keel is fixed
Immovable in Caledonia's strand!
Then shall our foes repent their bold invasion,
And roving armies shun the fatal shore.
LADY RANDOLPH. War I detest: but war with foreign foes,
Whose manners, language, and whose looks are strange,
Is not so horrid, nor to me so hateful,
As that which with our neighbors oft we wage.
A river here, there an ideal line
By fancy drawn, divides the sister kingdoms.
On each side dwells a people similar
As twins are to each other; valiant both;
Both for their valor famous thro' the world:
Yet will they not unite their kindred arms,
And, if they must have war, wage distant war,
But with each other fight in cruel conflict.
Gallant in strife and noble in their ire,
The battle is their pastime. They go forth
Gay in the morning, as to summer sport;
When ev'ning comes, the glory of the morn,
The youthful warrior, is a clod of clay.
Thus fall the prime of either hapless land;
And such the fruit of Scotch and English wars.
LORD RANDOLPH. I'll hear no more: this melody would make
A soldier drop his sword and doff his arms,
Sit down and weep the conquests he has made;
Yea (like a monk) sing rest and peace in heav'n
To souls of warriors in his battles slain.
Lady, farewell: I leave thee not alone;
Yonder comes one whose love makes duty light. *Exit*

Enter ANNA

ANNA. Forgive the rashness of your Anna's love:
Urged by affection, I have thus presumed
To interrupt your solitary thoughts,
And warn you of the hours that you neglect
And lose in sadness.
LADY RANDOLPH. So to lose my hours
Is all the use I wish to make of time.
ANNA. To blame thee, lady, suits not with my state:
But sure I am, since death first preyed on man,

Never did sister thus a brother mourn.
What had your sorrows been if you had lost,
In early youth, the husband of your heart?
LADY RANDOLPH. Oh!
ANNA. Have I distressed you with officious love,
And ill-timed mention of your brother's fate?
Forgive me, lady: humble tho' I am,
The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune:
So fervently I love you, that to dry
These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away.
LADY RANDOLPH. What power directed thy unconscious tongue
To speak as thou hast done? to name—
ANNA. I know not:
But since my words have made my mistress tremble,
I will speak so no more, but silent mix
My tears with hers.
LADY RANDOLPH. No, thou shalt not be silent.
I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
Henceforth th'instructed partner of my woes.
But what avails it? Can thy feeble pity
Roll back the flood of never ebbing time?
Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead alive?
ANNA. What means my noble mistress?
LADY RANDOLPH. Didst thou not ask what had my sorrows been?—
If I in early youth had lost a husband?
In the cold bosom of the earth is lodged,
Mangled with wounds, the husband of my youth;
And in some cavern of the ocean lies
My child and his.—
ANNA. Oh! lady most revered!
The tale wrapped up in your amazing words,
Deign to unfold.
LADY RANDOLPH. Alas! an ancient feud,
Hereditary evil, was the source
Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decreed
That my brave brother should in battle save
The life of Douglas' son, our house's foe:
The youthful warriors vowed eternal friendship.
To see the vaunted sister of his friend,
Impatient, Douglas to Balarmo came,
Under a borrowed name.—My heart he gained;
Nor did I long refuse the hand he begged:
My brother's presence authorized our marriage.
Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of down,
Had o'er us flown, when my loved lord was called
To fight his father's battles; and with him,
In spite of all my tears, did Malcolm go.
Scarce were they gone, when my stern sire was told
That the false stranger was Lord Douglas' son.
Frantic with rage, the baron drew his sword
And questioned me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
Kneeling beneath his sword, falt'ring I took
An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
Wed one of Douglas' name. Sincerity!
Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
Thy onward path! altho' the earth should gape,
And from the gulf of hell destruction cry
To take dissimulation's winding way.
ANNA. Alas! how few of woman's fearful kind
Durst own a truth so hardy!
LADY RANDOLPH. The first truth
Is easiest to avow: this moral learn—
This precious moral from my tragic tale.
In a few days the dreadful tidings came
That Douglas and my brother both were slain.
My lord! my life! my husband!—mighty God!
What had I done to merit such affliction?
ANNA. My dearest lady! many a tale of tears
I've listened to; but never did I hear
A tale so sad as this.
LADY RANDOLPH. In the first days
Of my distracting grief, I found myself—
As women wish to be who love their lords.
But who durst tell my father? The good priest
Who joined our hands, my brother's ancient tutor,
With his loved Malcolm in the battle fell:
They two alone were privy to the marriage.

On silence and concealment I resolved,
Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
That very night on which my son was born,
My nurse, the only confidant I had,
Set out with him to reach her sister's house:
But nurse nor infant have I ever seen,
Or heard of, Anna, since that fatal hour.
—My murdered child!—had thy fond mother feared
The loss of thee, she had loud fame defied,
Despised her father's rage, her father's grief,
And wandered with thee thro' the scorning world.

ANNA. Not seen nor heard of! then perhaps he lives.

LADY RANDOLPH. No. It was dark December; wind and rain
Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay
The destined road, and in its swelling flood
My faithful servant perished with my child.
Oh! hapless son of a most hapless sire!
But they are both at rest; and I alone
Dwell in this world of woe, condemned to walk,
Like a guilt-troubled ghost, my painful rounds;
Nor has despiteful Fate permitted me
The comfort of a solitary sorrow.
Though dead to love, I was compelled to wed
Randolph, who snatched me from a villain's arms;
And Randolph now possesses the domains
That by Sir Malcolm's death on me devolved—
Domains that should to Douglas' son have giv'n
A baron's title and a baron's power.
Such were my soothing thoughts, while I bewailed
The slaughtered father of a son unborn.
And when that son came, like a ray from heav'n
Which shines and disappears—alas, my child!
How long did thy fond mother grasp the hope
Of having thee, she knew not how, restored!
Year after year hath worn her hope away,
But left still undiminished her desire.

ANNA. The hand that spins th'uneven thread of life,
May smooth the length that's yet to come of yours.

LADY RANDOLPH. Not in this world; I have considered well
Its various evils, and on whom they fall.
Alas! how oft does Goodness wound itself,
And sweet Affection prove the spring of woe!
Oh, had I died when my loved husband fell!
Had some good angel oped to me the book
Of Providence and let me read my life,
My heart had broke when I beheld the sum
Of ills which one by one I have endured.

ANNA. That God whose ministers good angels are,
Hath shut the book, in mercy to mankind.
—But we must leave this theme. Glenalvon comes;
I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes,
And hitherwards he slowly stalks his way.

LADY RANDOLPH. I will avoid him. An ungracious person
Is doubly irksome in an hour like this.

ANNA. Why speaks my lady thus of Randolph's heir?

LADY RANDOLPH. Because he's not the heir of Randolph's virtues.
Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind
An artificial image of himself;
And he with ease can vary to the taste
Of different men, its features. Self-denied,
And master of his appetites he seems;
But his fierce nature, like a fox chained up,
Watches to seize unseen the wished-for prey.
Never were vice and virtue poised so ill
As in Glenalvon's unrelenting mind.
Yet is he brave and politic in war,
And stands aloft in these unruly times.
Why I describe him thus I'll tell hereafter;
Stay, and detain him till I reach the castle.
Exit LADY RANDOLPH

ANNA. O Happiness! where art thou to be found?
I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
Tho' graced with grandeur and in wealth arrayed;
Nor dost thou, it would seem with virtue dwell;
Else had this gentle lady missed thee not.

Enter GLENALVON

GLENALVON. What dost thou muse on, meditating maid?
Like some entranced and visionary seer,
On earth thou stand'st; thy thoughts ascend to heaven.
ANNA. Would that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a seer,
To have my doubts by heavenly vision cleared!
GLENALVON. What dost thou doubt of? What hast thou to do
With subjects intricate? Thy youth, thy beauty,
Cannot be questioned. Think of these good gifts,
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.
ANNA. Let women view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty. Who so fair as she?
But I must follow; this revolving day
Awakes the memory of her ancient woes.

Exit ANNA

GLENALVON. (*Solus*) So!—Lady Randolph shuns me; by and by
I'll woo her as the lion woos his brides.
The deed's a doing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich valleys and a chief of power.
The season is most apt; my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
Randolph has lived too long: his better fate
Had the ascendant once and kept me down.
When I had seized the dame, by chance he came,
Rescued, and had the lady for his labor.
I 'scaped unknown—a slender consolation!
Heav'n is my witness that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet I am not safe;
By love, or something like it, stung, inflamed,
Madly I blabbed my passion to his wife,
And she has threatened to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know,
But well I know the Baron's wrath is deadly.
I will not live in fear. The man I dread
Is as a Dane to me—aye, and the man
Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire.
No bar but he; she has no kinsman near—
No brother in his sister's quarrel bold;
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I know no chief that will defy Glenalvon.

[*Exit*]

ACT II

SCENE I. *A court, etc.*

Enter Servants *and a* Stranger *at one door, and* LADY RANDOLPH *and* ANNA *at another*

LADY RANDOLPH. What means this clamor? Stranger, speak secure;
Hast thou been wronged? Have these rude men presumed
To vex the weary traveller on his way?
1ST SERVANT. By us no stranger ever suffered wrong.
This man with outcry wild has called us forth,
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH *and a young man, with their swords drawn and bloody*

LADY RANDOLPH. Not vain the stranger's fears!—How fares my lord?
LORD RANDOLPH. That it fares well, thanks to this gallant youth,
Whose valor saved me from a wretched death!
As down the winding dale I walked alone,
At the cross way four armèd men attacked me
—Rovers, I judge, from the licentious camp,
Who would have quickly laid Lord Randolph low,
Had not this brave and generous stranger come,
Like my good angel, in the hour of fate,
And, mocking danger, made my foes his own.
They turned upon him, but his active arm
Struck to the ground, from whence they rose no more,
The fiercest two; the others fled amain
And left him master of the bloody field.
Speak, Lady Randolph; upon Beauty's tongue
Dwell accents pleasing to the brave and bold.

Speak noble dame, and thank him for thy lord.

LADY RANDOLPH. My lord, I cannot speak what now I feel.

My heart o'erflows with gratitude to Heav'n
And to this noble youth, who, all unknown
To you and yours, deliberated not
Nor paused at peril, but, humanely brave,
Fought on your side against such fearful odds.
Have you not learned of him, whom we should thank—
Whom call the saviour of Lord Randolph's life?

LORD RANDOLPH. I asked that question, and he answered not.

(*To the* Stranger)

—But I must know who my deliverer is.

STRANGER. A low-born man, of parentage obscure,
Who naught can boast but his desire to be
A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

LORD RANDOLPH. Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobled
By the great King of Kings! thou art ordained
And stamped a hero by the sovereign hand
Of Nature! Blush not, flower of modesty
As well as valor, to declare thy birth.

STRANGER. My name is Norval: on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks—a frugal swain,
Whose constant cares were to increase his store,
And keep his only son, myself, at home.
For I had heard of battles, and I longed
To follow to the field some warlike lord:
And Heav'n soon granted what my sire denied.
This moon which rose last night, round as my shield,
Had not yet filled her horns, when, by her light,
A band of fierce barbarians, from the hills,
Rushed like a torrent down upon the vale,
Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled
For safety and for succor. I alone,
With bended bow and quiver full of arrows,
Hovered about the enemy and marked
The road he took; then hasted to my friends,
Whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men,
I met advancing. The pursuit I led
Till we o'ertook the spoil-encumbered foe.
We fought and conquered. Ere a sword was drawn,
An arrow from my bow had pierced their chief,
Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.
Returning home in triumph, I disdained
The shepherd's slothful life; and having heard
That our good king had summoned his bold peers
To lead their warriors to the Carron side,
I left my father's house, and took with me
A chosen servant to conduct my steps—
Yon trembling coward, who forsook his master.
Journeying with this intent, I passed these towers,
And, heaven-directed, came this day to do
The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

LORD RANDOLPH. He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehearsed?
—My brave deliverer! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and in a monarch's sight
Contend with princes for the prize of fame.
I will present thee to our Scottish king,
Whose valiant spirit ever valor loved.
Ha! my Matilda, wherefore starts that tear?

LADY RANDOLPH. I cannot say, for various affections
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell;
Yet each of them may well command a tear.
I joy that thou art safe, and I admire
Him and his fortunes, who hath wrought thy safety.
Obscure and friendless, he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolved to hunt for fame, and with his sword
To gain distinction which his birth denied.
In this attempt unknown he might have perished,
And gained, with all his valor, but oblivion.
Now graced by thee, his virtue serves no more

Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope
He stands conspicuous; fame and great renown
Are brought within the compass of his sword.
On this my mind reflected whilst you spoke,
And bless'd the wonder-working Lord of Heaven.

LORD RANDOLPH. Pious and grateful ever are thy thoughts!
My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.
Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon,
In honor and command shall Norval be.

NORVAL. I know not how to thank you. Rude I am,
In speech and manners: never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence; yet, my lord,
There's something in my breast which makes me bold
To say that Norval ne'er will shame thy favor.

LADY RANDOLPH. I will be sworn thou wilt not. Thou shalt be
My knight, and ever, as thou didst to-day,
With happy valor guard the life of Randolph.

LORD RANDOLPH. Well hast thou spoke.
Let me forbid reply. (*To* NORVAL)
We are thy debtors still! Thy high desert
O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
As was at first intended, to the camp.
Some of my train, I see, are speeding hither,
Impatient, doubtless, of their lord's delay.
Go with me, Norval, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,
Who languish for the fight and beat the air
With brandished swords.

NORVAL. Let us be gone, my lord.

LORD RANDOLPH. (*To* LADY RANDOLPH)
About the time that the declining sun
Shall his broad orbit o'er yon hills suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest; my tent I pitch
To-morrow in the field. Prepare the feast.
Free is his heart who for his country fights;
He in the eve of battle may resign
Himself to social pleasure, sweetest then,
When danger to a soldier's soul endears
The human joy that never may return.

Exeunt RANDOLPH *and* NORVAL

LADY RANDOLPH. His parting words have struck a fatal truth.
O Douglas! Douglas! tender was the time
When we two parted, ne'er to meet again!
How many years of anguish and despair
Has Heav'n annexed to those swift passing hours
Of love and fondness! Then my bosom's flame,
Oft as blown back by the rude breath of fear,
Returned and with redoubled ardor blazed.

ANNA. May gracious Heav'n pour the sweet balm of peace
Into the wounds that fester in your breast!
For earthly consolation cannot cure them.

LADY RANDOLPH. One only cure can Heav'n itself bestow—
A grave—that bed in which the weary rest.
Wretch that I am!—Alas! why am I so?
At every happy parent I repine!
How blest the mother of yon gallant Norval!
She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born.
She nursed her smiling infant on her breast,
Tended the child, and reared the pleasing boy.
She, with affection's triumph, saw the youth
In grace and comeliness surpass his peers;
Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,
And to the roaring waters gave my child.

ANNA. Alas! alas! why will you thus resume
Your grief afresh? I thought that gallant youth
Would for a while have won you from your woe.
On him intent you gazed, with a look
Much more delighted than your pensive eye
Has deigned on other objects to bestow.

LADY RANDOLPH. Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even there mine eye
Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow;
I thought that had the son of Douglas lived,
He might have been like this young gallant stranger,
And paired with him in features and in shape,
In all endowments, as in years, I deem,

My boy with blooming Norval might have numbered.
Whilst thus I mused, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger, wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee, said I to myself,
With all my power, and grace with all my favor.

ANNA. Sure, Heav'n will bless so gen'rous a resolve.
You must, my noble dame, exert your power.
You must awake; devices will be framed,
And arrows pointed at the breast of Norval.

LADY RANDOLPH. Glenalvon's false and crafty head will work
Against a rival in his kinsman's love
If I deter him not. I only can.
Bold as he is, Glenalvon will beware
How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.
I'll be the artist of young Norval's fortune.
'Tis pleasing to admire! most apt was I
To this affection in my better days,
Though now I seem to you shrunk up, retired
Within the narrow compass of my woe.
Have you not sometimes seen an early flower
Open its bud, and spread its silken leaves
To catch sweet airs, and odors to bestow;
Then, by the keen blast nipped, pull in its leaves,
And tho' still living, die to scent and beauty?
Emblem of me; affliction, like a storm,
Hath killed the forward blossom of my heart.

Enter GLENALVON

GLENALVON. Where is my dearest kinsman—noble Randolph?

LADY RANDOLPH. Have you not heard, Glenalvon, of the base—

GLENALVON. I have; and that the villains may not 'scape,
With a strong band I have begirt the wood.
If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,
And torture force from them th'important secret,
Whether some foe of Randolph hired their swords,
Or if—

LADY RANDOLPH. That care becomes a kinsman's love.
—I have a counsel for Glenalvon's ear.

Exit ANNA

GLENALVON. To him your counsels always are commands.

LADY RANDOLPH. I have not found so; thou art known to me.

GLENALVON. Known!

LADY RANDOLPH. And most certain is my cause of knowledge.

GLENALVON. What do you know? By the most blessed cross,
You much amaze me. No created being,
Yourself except, durst thus accost Glenalvon.

LADY RANDOLPH. Is guilt so bold? and dost thou make a merit
Of thy pretended meekness? This to me,
Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,
Have hitherto concealed what, if divulged,
Would make thee nothing, or, what's worse than that,
An outcast beggar, and unpitied too;
For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.

GLENALVON. Thy virtue awes me. First of womankind!
Permit me yet to say, that the fond man
Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,
If he is brought by love to misery,
In fortune ruined, as in mind forlorn,
Unpitied cannot be. Pity's the alms
Which on such beggars freely is bestowed;
For mortals know that love is still their lord,
And o'er their vain resolves advances still,
As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves
Through the dry heath before the fanning wind.

LADY RANDOLPH. Reserve these accents for some other ear.
To love's apology I listen not.
Mark thou my words, for it is meet thou shouldst.
His brave deliverer Randolph here retains.
Perhaps his presence may not please thee well;
But, at thy peril, practise aught against him.
Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake

And loosen the good root he has in Randolph,
Whose favorites I know thou hast supplanted.
Thou look'st at me as if thou fain would'st pry
Into my heart. 'Tis open as my speech.
I give this early caution, and put on
The curb before thy temper breaks away.
The friendless stranger my protection claims:
His friend I am, and be not thou his foe.
Exit

GLENALVON. Child that I was to start at my own shadow,
And be the shallow fool of coward conscience!
I am not what I have been, what I should be.
The darts of destiny have almost pierced
My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith
In holy legends and religious tales,
I should conclude there was an arm above
That fought against me, and malignant turned;
To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.
Why, rape and murder are not simple means!
Th'imperfect rape to Randolph gave a spouse;
And the intended murder introduced
A favorite to hide the sun from me—
And worst of all, a rival. Burning hell!
This were thy center if I thought she loved him!
'Tis certain she contemns me—nay, commands me,
And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,
In his behalf. And shall I thus be braved?
—"Curbed," as she calls it, by dame Chastity?
Infernal fiends—if any fiends there are
More fierce than hate, ambition, and revenge—
Rise up, and fill my bosom with your fires
And policy remorseless! Chance may spoil
A single aim, but perseverance must
Prosper at last. For chance and fate are words:
Persistive wisdom is the fate of man.
Darkly a project peers upon my mind,
Like the red moon when rising in the east,
Crossed and divided by strange-colored clouds.
I'll seek the slave who came with Norval hither,
And for his cowardice was spurned from him.
I've known a follower's rankled bosom breed
Venom most fatal to his heedless lord. *Exit*

ACT III

SCENE I. *A court, etc., as before*

Enter ANNA

ANNA. Thy vassals, Grief, great nature's order break,
And change the noon-tide to the midnight hour.
Whilst Lady Randolph sleeps, I will walk forth
And taste the air that breathes on yonder bank.
Sweet may her slumbers be! Ye ministers
Of gracious Heaven who love the human race,
Angels and seraphs who delight in goodness!
Forsake your skies, and to her couch descend!
There from her fancy chase those dismal forms
That haunt her waking; her sad spirit charm
With images celestial, such as please
The blest above upon their golden beds.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. One of the vile assassins is secured.
We found the villain lurking in the wood:
With dreadful imprecations he denies
All knowledge of the crime. But this is not
His first essay; these jewels were concealed
In the most secret places of his garment—
Belike the spoils of some that he has murdered.
ANNA. Let me look on them.—Ha! here is a heart,
The chosen crest of Douglas' valiant name!
These are no vulgar[1] jewels.—Guard the wretch. *Exit* ANNA

1 common.

Enter Servants *with a* Prisoner

STRANGER. I know no more than does the child unborn,
Of what you charge me with.
1ST SERVANT. You say so, sir!
But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.
Behold, the lady of Lord Randolph comes;
Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH *and* ANNA

ANNA. Summon your utmost fortitude before
You speak with him. Your dignity, your fame,
Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret
Which in a moment from your lips may fly.
LADY RANDOLPH. Thou shalt behold me, with a desperate heart,
Hear how my infant perished. See, he kneels.
(*The* Prisoner *kneels*)
STRANGER. Heav'n bless that countenance so sweet and mild!
A judge like thee makes innocence more bold.
Oh, save me, lady! from these cruel men,
Who have attacked and seized me, who accuse
Me of intended murder! As I hope
For mercy at the judgment-seat of God,
The tender lamb, that never nipped the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.
LADY RANDOLPH. Of this man's guilt what proof can ye produce?
1ST SERVANT. We found him lurking in the hollow glynn.
When viewed and called upon, amazed he fled.
We overtook him, and enquired from whence
And what he was: he said he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfied with this, we searched his clothes,
And found these jewels, whose rich value plead
Most powerfully against him. Hard he seems,
And old in villainy. Permit us try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.
STRANGER. O gentle lady! by your lord's dear life,
Which these weak hands, I swear, did ne'er assail;
And by your children's welfare, spare my age!
Let not the iron tear my ancient joints,
And my grey hairs bring to the grave with pain.
LADY RANDOLPH. Account for these. Thine own they cannot be;
For these, I say, be steadfast to the truth;
Detected falsehood is most certain death.
(ANNA *removes the* Servants *and returns*)
STRANGER. [*Aside*] Alas! I'm sore beset! Let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul!
Eternal justice is in this most just!
I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.
LADY RANDOLPH. Oh! Anna hear!—Once more I charge thee speak
The truth direct; for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration
With which, if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.
STRANGER. Then, thus adjured, I'll speak to you as just
As if you were the minister of Heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.
Some eighteen years ago I rented land
Of brave Sir Malcolm, then Balarmo's lord;
But falling to decay, his servants seized
All that I had, and then turned me and mine
(Four helpless infants and their weeping mother)
Out to the mercy of the winter winds.
A little hovel by the river's side
Received us: there hard labor and the skill
In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
Supported life. Whilst thus we poorly lived,
One stormy night, as I remember well,
The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof;
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shrieked.
At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
To where the circling eddy of a pool,
Beneath the ford, used oft to bring within

My reach, whatever floating thing the stream
Had caught. The voice was ceased; the person lost:
But looking sad and earnest on the waters,
By the moon's light I saw, whirled round and round,
A basket. Soon I drew it to the bank,
And nestled curious[1] there an infant lay.
LADY RANDOLPH. Was he alive?
STRANGER. He was.
LADY RANDOLPH. Inhuman that thou art!
How couldst thou kill what waves and tempests spared?
STRANGER. I am not so inhuman.
LADY RANDOLPH. Didst thou not?
ANNA. My noble mistress, you are moved too much.
This man has not the aspect of stern murder;
Let him go on, and you, I hope, will hear
Good tidings of your kinsman's long-lost child.
STRANGER. The needy man who has known better days,
One whom distress has spited at the world,
Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds as make the prosperous men
Lift up their hands and wonder who could do them.
And such a man was I—a man declined,
Who saw no end of black adversity;
Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
Have touched that infant with a hand of harm.
LADY RANDOLPH. Ha! dost thou say so! Then perhaps he lives!
STRANGER. Not many days ago he was alive.
LADY RANDOLPH. O God of Heav'n! did he then die so lately?
STRANGER. I did not say he died; I hope he lives.
Not many days ago these eyes beheld
Him, flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.
LADY RANDOLPH. Where is he now?
STRANGER. Alas! I know not where.

[1] carefully.

LADY RANDOLPH. O Fate! I fear thee still. Thou riddler, speak
Direct and clear; else I will search thy soul.
ANNA. Permit me, ever honored! Keen impatience,
Though hard to be restrained, defeats itself.
—Pursue thy story with a faithful tongue,
To the last hour that thou didst keep the child.
STRANGER. Fear not my faith, though I must speak my shame.
Within the cradle where the infant lay,
Was stowed a mighty store of gold and jewels;
Tempted by which, we did resolve to hide
From all the world this wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed the noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travelled to the north,
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought forth
Our secret wealth. But God's all-seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore.
For one by one all our own children died,
And he, the stranger, sole remained the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I,
Who with a father's fondness loved the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret; but my anxious wife,
Foreboding evil, never would consent.
Meanwhile the stripling grew in years and beauty,
And, as we oft observed, he bore himself
Not as the offspring of our cottage blood;
For nature will break out. Mild with the mild,
But with the froward he was fierce as fire,
And night and day he talked of war and arms.
I set myself against his warlike bent,
But all in vain; for when a desperate band
Of robbers from the savage mountains came—
LADY RANDOLPH. Eternal Providence! What is thy name?
STRANGER. My name is Norval; and my name he bears.
LADY RANDOLPH. 'Tis he! 'tis he himself! It is my son!

Oh, sovereign mercy! 'Twas my child I saw!
No wonder, Anna, that my bosom burned.
ANNA. Just are your transports; ne'er was woman's heart
Proved with such fierce extremes. High fated dame!
But yet remember that you are beheld
By servile eyes: your gestures may be seen
Impassioned, strange—perhaps your words o'erheard.
LADY RANDOLPH. Well dost thou counsel, Anna. Heav'n bestow
On me that wisdom which my state requires!
ANNA. The moments of deliberation pass,
And soon you must resolve. This useful man
Must be dismissed in safety, ere my lord
Shall with his brave deliverer return.
STRANGER. If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
Have of your words and gestures rightly judged,
Thou art the daughter of my ancient master;
The child I rescued from the flood is thine.
LADY RANDOLPH. With thee dissimulation now were vain.
I am indeed the daughter of Sir Malcolm;
The child thou rescu'dst from the flood is mine.
STRANGER. Blest be the hour that made me a poor man!
My poverty hath saved my master's house!
LADY RANDOLPH. Thy words surprise me. Sure thou dost not feign!
The tear stands in thine eye. Such love from thee
Sir Malcolm's house deserved not, if aright
Thou told'st the story of thy own distress.
STRANGER. Sir Malcolm of our barons was the flower;
The fastest friend, the best, the kindest master.
But ah! he knew not of my sad estate.
After that battle, where his gallant son,
Your own brave brother, fell, the good old lord
Grew desperate and reckless of the world;
And never, as he erst was wont, went forth
To overlook the conduct of his servants.
By them I was thrust out, and them I blame.
May Heav'n so judge me as I judged my master!
And God so love me as I love his race!
LADY RANDOLPH. His race shall yet reward thee. On thy faith
Depends the fate of thy loved master's house.
Rememb'rest thou a little lonely hut,
That like a holy hermitage appears
Among the clifts of Carron?
STRANGER. The cottage of the clifts.
LADY RANDOLPH. 'Tis that I mean.
There dwells a man of venerable age,
Who in my father's service spent his youth;
Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain
Till I shall call upon thee to declare,
Before the king and nobles, what thou now
To me hast told. No more but this, and thou
Shalt live in honor all thy future days;
Thy son so long shall call thee father still,
And all the land shall bless the man who saved
The son of Douglas, and Sir Malcolm's heir.
Remember well my words: if thou shouldst meet
Him whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so,
And mention nothing of his nobler father.
STRANGER. Fear not that I shall mar so fair an harvest,
By putting in my sickle ere 'tis ripe.
Why did I leave my home and ancient dame?
To find the youth, to tell him all I knew,
And make him wear these jewels in his arms,
Which might, I thought, be challenged, and so bring
To light the secret of his noble birth.
(LADY RANDOLPH *goes toward the* Servants)
LADY RANDOLPH. This man is not th'assassin you suspected,
Though chance combined some likelihoods against him.
He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.
'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
Since your mistaken zeal hath dragged him hither.
Exeunt Stranger *and* Servants

My faithful Anna! dost thou share my joy?
I know thou dost. Unparalleled event!
Reaching from heav'n to earth, Jehovah's arm
Snatched from the waves, and brings to me, my son!
Judge of the widow and the orphan's father,
Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks
For such a gift! What does my Anna think
Of the young eaglet of a valiant nest?
How soon he gazed on bright and burning arms,
Spurned the low dunghill where his fate had thrown him,
And towered up to the region of his sire!

ANNA. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy!
Mysterious nature, with the unseen cord
Of powerful instinct, drew you to your own.

LADY RANDOLPH. The ready story of his birth believed,
Suppressed my fancy quite; nor did he owe
To any likeness my so sudden favor.
But now I long to see his face again,
Examine every feature, and find out
The lineaments of Douglas or my own.
But most of all I long to let him know
Who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,
And tell him all the story of his father.

ANNA. With wary caution you must bear yourself
In public, lest your tenderness break forth,
And in observers stir conjectures strange.
For, if a cherub in the shape of woman
Should walk this world, yet defamation would,
Like a vile cur, bark at the angel's train.
To-day the baron started at your tears.

LADY RANDOLPH. He did so, Anna! well thy mistress knows
If the least circumstance, mote of offence,
Should touch the baron's eye, his sight would be
With jealousy disordered. But the more
It does behove me instant to declare
The birth of Douglas, and assert his rights.
This night I purpose with my son to meet,
Reveal the secret, and consult with him;
For wise he is, or my fond judgment errs.
As he does now, so looked his noble father,
Arrayed in Nature's ease. His mien, his speech,
Were sweetly simple, and full oft deceived
Those trivial mortals who seem always wise.
But, when the matter matched his mighty mind,
Up rose the hero: on his piercing eye
Sat observation; on each glance of thought
Decision followed, as the thunderbolt
Pursues the flash.

ANNA. That demon haunts you still.
—Behold Glenalvon.

LADY RANDOLPH. Now I shun him not.
This day I braved him in behalf of Norval—
Perhaps too far; at least my nicer fears
For Douglas thus interpret.

Enter GLENALVON

GLENALVON. Noble dame!
The hov'ring Dane at last his men hath landed,
No band of pirates, but a mighty host,
That come to settle where their valor conquers—
To win a country, or to lose themselves.

LADY RANDOLPH. But whence comes this intelligence, Glenalvon?

GLENALVON. A nimble courier sent from yonder camp
To hasten up the chieftains of the north,
Informed me, as he passed, that the fierce Dane
Had on the eastern coast of Lothian landed,
Near to that place where the sea rock immense,
Amazing Bass, looks o'er a fertile land.

LADY RANDOLPH. Then must this western army march to join
The warlike troops that guard Edena's[1] tow'rs.

GLENALVON. Beyond all question. If impairing time
Has not effaced the image of a place
Once perfect in my breast, there is a wild
Which lies to westward of that mighty rock,
And seems by nature formèd for the camp
Of water-wafted armies, whose chief strength

1 Edinburgh.

Lies in firm foot, unflanked with warlike horse.
If martial skill directs the Danish lords,
There inaccessible their army lies
To our swift-scow'ring horse; the bloody field
Must man to man, and foot to foot be fought.

LADY RANDOLPH. How many mothers shall bewail their sons!
How many widows weep their husbands slain!
Ye dames of Denmark, ev'n for you I feel,
Who, sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,
Long look for lords that never shall return.

GLENALVON. Oft has th'unconquered Caledonian sword
Widowed the north. The children of the slain
Come, as I hope, to meet their fathers' fate.
The monster War, with her infernal brood,
Loud-yelling Fury and life-ending pain,
Are objects suited to Glenalvon's soul.
Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death;
Reproach more piercing than the pointed sword.

LADY RANDOLPH. I scorn thee not but when I ought to scorn,
Nor e'er reproach but when insulted virtue
Against audacious vice asserts herself.
I own thy worth, Glenalvon; none more apt
Than I to praise thine eminence in arms,
And be the echo of thy martial fame.
No longer vainly feed a guilty passion:
Go and pursue a lawful mistress, Glory.
Upon the Danish crests redeem thy fault,
And let thy valor be the shield of Randolph.

GLENALVON. One instant stay, and hear an altered man.
When Beauty pleads for Virtue, Vice, abashed,
Flies its own colors and goes o'er to Virtue.
I am your convert; time will show how truly:
Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
That youth for whom your ardent zeal to-day
Somewhat too haughtily defied your slave,
Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend,
And turn death from him, with a guardian arm.
Sedate by use, my bosom maddens not
At the tumultuous uproar of the field.

LADY RANDOLPH. Act thus, Glenalvon, and I am thy friend.
But that's thy least reward; believe me, sir,
The truly generous is the truly wise,
And he who loves not others lives unblest.

Exit LADY RANDOLPH

GLENALVON. (*Solus*) Amen! and virtue is its own reward!
I think that I have hit the very tone
In which she loves to speak. Honeyed assent,
How pleasant art thou to the taste of man,
And woman also! flattery direct
Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
Who doubt its operation. 'Tis my key,
And opes the wicket of the human heart.
How far I have succeeded, now I know not;
Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
Is lulled awhile. 'Tis her alone I fear;
Whilst she and Randolph live, and live in faith
And amity, uncertain is my tenure.
Fate o'er my head suspends disgrace and death
By that weak air, a peevish female's will.
I am not idle, but the ebbs and flows
Of fortune's tide cannot be calculated.
That slave of Norval's I have found most apt.
I show'd him gold, and he has pawned his soul
To say and swear whatever I suggest.
Norval, I'm told, has that alluring look,
'Twixt man and woman, which I have observed
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,
Who are, like Lady Randolph, full of virtue.
In raising Randolph's jealousy, I may
But point him to the truth. He seldom errs
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind.

[*Exit*]

ACT IV

SCENE I. [*The court, as before*]

Flourish of Trumpets. Enter LORD RANDOLPH *attended*

LORD RANDOLPH. Summon an hundred horse, by break of day,
To wait our pleasure at the castle gate.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH

LADY RANDOLPH. Alas, my lord! I've heard unwelcome news;
The Danes are landed.
LORD RANDOLPH. Aye, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian bent to take a spoil:
No sportive war, no tournament essay,
Of some young knight resolved to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms.
The Danes are landed: we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.
LADY RANDOLPH. Dreadful times!
LORD RANDOLPH. The 'fenceless villages are all forsaken,
The trembling mothers and their children lodged
In wall-girt towers and castles, whilst the men
Retire indignant. Yet, like broken waves,
They but retire more awful to return.
LADY RANDOLPH. Immense, as Fame reports, the Danish host!
LORD RANDOLPH. Were it as numerous as loud Fame reports,
An army knit like ours would pierce it thro'.
Brothers, that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions fill our warlike files;
For his dear offspring and the wife he loves,
The husband and the fearless father arm.
In vulgar breasts heroic ardor burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.
LADY RANDOLPH. Men's minds are tempered, like their swords, for war;
Lovers of danger, on destruction's brink
They joy to rear erect their daring forms.
Hence early graves; hence the lone widow's life,
And the sad mother's grief-embittered age.
—Where is our gallant guest?
LORD RANDOLPH. Down in the vale
I left him, managing a fiery steed,
Whose stubbornness had foiled the strength and skill
Of every rider.—But behold! he comes,
In earnest conversation with Glenalvon.

Enter NORVAL *and* GLENALVON

—Glenalvon! with the lark arise; go forth,
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale.
Private I travel to the royal camp:
Norval, thou goest with me. But say, young man!
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war
And in such terms as I o'erheard to-day?
War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught amongst the shepherd swains.
NORVAL. Small is the skill my lord delights to praise
In him he favors. Hear from whence it came.
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by shepherds trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit lived, a melancholy man,
Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains.
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself,
Did they report him; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherd's alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touched
With rev'rence and with pity. Mild he spake,
And, entering on discourse, such stories told
As made me oft revisit his sad cell.
For he had been a soldier in his youth,
And fought in famous battles, when the peers
Of Europe, by the bold Godfredo led,
Against th'usurping infidel displayed
The cross of Christ, and won the Holy Land.
Pleased with my admiration and the fire
His speech struck from me, the old man would shake
His years away, and act his young encounters.
Then, having showed his wounds, he'd sit him down,
And all the live-long day discourse of war.
To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf
He cut the figures of the marshalled hosts,
Described the motions, and explained the use
Of the deep column and the lengthened line,
The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm.
For all that Saracen or Christian knew

Of war's vast art, was to this hermit known.
LORD RANDOLPH. Why did this soldier in a desert hide
Those qualities that should have graced a camp?
NORVAL. That too at last I learned. Unhappy man!
Returning homewards by Messina's port,
Loaded with wealth and honors bravely won,
A rude and boist'rous captain of the sea
Fastened a quarrel on him. Fierce they fought;
The stranger fell, and with his dying breath
Declared his name and lineage. "Mighty God!"
The soldier cried; "My brother! oh, my brother!"
LADY RANDOLPH. His brother!
NORVAL. Yes; of the same parents born—
His only brother. They exchanged forgiveness,
And happy, in my mind, was he that died;
For many deaths has the survivor suffered.
In the wild desert on a rock he sits,
Or on some nameless stream's untrodden banks,
And ruminates all day his dreadful fate.
At times, alas! not in his perfect mind,
Holds dialogues with his loved brother's ghost,
And oft each night forsakes his sullen couch
To make sad orisons for him he slew.
LADY RANDOLPH. To what mysterious woes are mortals born!
In this dire tragedy were there no more
Unhappy persons? Did the parents live?
NORVAL. No, they were dead; kind Heav'n had closed their eyes
Before their son had shed his brother's blood.
LORD RANDOLPH. Hard is his fate; for he was not to blame!
There is a destiny in this strange world,
Which oft decrees an undeservèd doom:
Let schoolmen tell us why.—From whence these sounds? (*Trumpets at a distance*)

Enter an Officer

OFFICER. My lord, the trumpets of the troops of Lorn.
The valiant leader hails the noble Randolph.
LORD RANDOLPH. Mine ancient guest! Does he the warriors lead?
Has Denmark roused the brave old knight to arms?
OFFICER. No; worn with warfare, he resigns the sword.
His eldest hope, the valiant John of Lorn,
Now leads his kindred bands.
LORD RANDOLPH. Glenalvon, go.
With hospitality's most strong request
Entreat the chief. *Exit* GLENALVON
OFFICER. My lord, requests are vain.
He urges on, impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach.
LORD RANDOLPH. May victory sit on the warrior's plume!
Bravest of men! his flocks and herds are safe:
Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secured;
Yet foremost he into the plain descends,
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.
Such were the heroes of the ancient world,
Contemners they of indolence and gain,
But still, for love of glory and of arms,
Prone to encounter peril, and to lift
Against each strong antagonist, the spear.
I'll go and press the hero to my breast.
Exit LORD RANDOLPH *with the* Officer
LADY RANDOLPH. The soldier's loftiness, the pride and pomp
Investing awful war, Norval, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.
NORVAL. Ah! should they not?
Blest be the hour I left my father's house!
I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.
Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand;
And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.
LADY RANDOLPH. There is a gen'rous spirit in thy breast
That could have well sustained a prouder fortune.
This way with me; under yon spreading beech,
Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,
I will amaze thee with a wond'rous tale.
NORVAL. Let there be danger, lady, with the secret,
That I may hug it to my grateful heart,

And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life;
These are the sole possessions of poor Norval.
LADY RANDOLPH. Know'st thou these gems?
NORVAL. Durst I believe mine eyes,
I'd say I knew them and they were my father's.
LADY RANDOLPH. Thy father's, say'st thou?—Ah, they were thy father's!
NORVAL. I saw them once, and curiously inquired
Of both my parents whence such splendor came.
But I was checked, and more could never learn.
LADY RANDOLPH. Then learn of me: thou art not Norval's son.
NORVAL. Not Norval's son!
LADY RANDOLPH. Not of a shepherd sprung.
NORVAL. Lady, who am I then?
LADY RANDOLPH. Noble thou art; For noble was thy sire.
NORVAL. I will believe—
Oh, tell me farther! Say, who was my father?
LADY RANDOLPH. Douglas!
NORVAL. Lord Douglas, whom to-day I saw?
LADY RANDOLPH. His younger brother.
NORVAL. And in yonder camp?
LADY RANDOLPH. Alas!
NORVAL. You make me tremble—sighs and tears!
Lives my brave father?
LADY RANDOLPH. Ah! too brave, indeed!
He fell in battle ere thyself was born.
NORVAL. Ah me, unhappy! Ere I saw the light!
—But does my mother live? I may conclude,
From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.
LADY RANDOLPH. She lives, but wastes her life in constant woe,
Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.
NORVAL. You that are skilled so well in the sad story
Of my unhappy parents, and with tears
Bewail their destiny, now have compassion
Upon the offspring of the friends you loved.
Oh, tell me who and where my mother is!
Oppressed by a base world, perhaps she bends
Beneath the weight of other ills than grief,
And, desolate, implores of Heav'n the aid
Her son should give. It is, it must be so—
Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.
Oh, tell me her condition! Can the sword—
Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?
LADY RANDOLPH. Thy virtue ends her woe.
—My son! my son!
I am thy mother, and the wife of Douglas!
(*Falls upon his neck*)
NORVAL. Oh, heav'n and earth! how wond'rous is my fate!
Art thou my mother? Ever let me kneel!
LADY RANDOLPH. Image of Douglas! fruit of fatal love!
All that I owe thy sire, I pay to thee.
NORVAL. Respect and admiration still possess me,
Checking the love and fondness of a son;
Yet I was filial to my humble parents.
But did my sire surpass the rest of men
As thou excellest all of womankind?
LADY RANDOLPH. Arise, my son! In me thou dost behold
The poor remains of beauty once admired.
The autumn of my days is come already,
For sorrow made my summer haste away.
Yet in my prime I equalled not thy father.
His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes
Liker the dove's; and, as he pleased, he won
All hearts with softness, or with spirit awed.
NORVAL. How did he fall? Sure, 'twas a bloody field
When Douglas died. Oh, I have much to ask!
LADY RANDOLPH. Hereafter thou shalt hear the lengthened tale
Of all thy father's and thy mother's woes.
At present this—Thou art the rightful heir
Of yonder castle, and the wide domains
Which now Lord Randolph, as my husband, holds.
But thou shalt not be wronged; I have the power

To right thee still. Before the King I'll kneel,
And call Lord Douglas to protect his blood.
NORVAL. The blood of Douglas will protect itself.
LADY RANDOLPH. But we shall need both friends and favor, boy,
To wrest thy lands and lordship from the gripe
Of Randolph and his kinsman. Yet I think
My tale will move each gentle heart to pity,
My life incline the virtuous to believe.
NORVAL. To be the son of Douglas is to me
Inheritance enough. Declare my birth,
And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.
LADY RANDOLPH. Thou dost not know what perils and injustice
Await the poor man's valor. O my son!
The noblest blood in all the land's abashed
Having no lacquey but pale Poverty.
Too long hast thou been thus attended, Douglas!
Too long hast thou been deemed a peasant's child.
The wanton heir of some inglorious chief
Perhaps has scorned thee in the youthful sports,
Whilst thy indignant spirit swelled in vain.
Such contumely thou no more shalt bear;
But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs,
Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs
That we should part before yon chief's return.
Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand
Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,
Anxious to see thee, dictated before
This casual opportunity arose
Of private conference. Its purport mark;
For as I there appoint, we meet again.
Leave me, my son, and frame thy manners still
To Norval's, not to noble Douglas' state.
NORVAL. I will remember. Where is Norval now?
That good old man.
LADY RANDOLPH. At hand concealed he lies,
An useful witness. But beware, my son,
Of yon Glenalvon; in his guilty breast
Resides a villain's shrewdness. Ever prone
To false conjecture, he hath grieved my heart.
NORVAL. Has he, indeed? Then let yon false Glenalvon
Beware of me. *Exit* DOUGLAS
LADY RANDOLPH. There burst the smothered flame!
O thou all-righteous and eternal King!
Who Father of the fatherless art called,
Protect my son! Thy inspiration, Lord,
Hath filled his bosom with that sacred fire
Which in the breasts of his forefathers burned.
Set him on high, like them, that he may shine
The star and glory of his native land!
Then let the minister of death descend,
And bear my willing spirit to its place.
—Yonder they come. How do bad women find
Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt,
When I, by reason and by justice urged,
Full hardly can dissemble with these men
In nature's pious cause?

Enter LORD RANDOLPH *and* GLENALVON

LORD RANDOLPH. Yon gallant chief,
Of arms enamoured, all repose disclaims.
LADY RANDOLPH. Be not, my lord, by his example swayed:
Arrange the business of to-morrow now,
And when you enter, speak of war no more.
Exit LADY RANDOLPH
LORD RANDOLPH. 'Tis so, by Heav'n! Her mien, her voice, her eye,
And her impatience to be gone, confirm it.
GLENALVON. He parted from her now. Behind the mount,
Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.
LORD RANDOLPH. For sad, sequestered virtue she's renowned!
GLENALVON. Most true, my lord.
LORD RANDOLPH. Yet this distinguished dame
Invites a youth, th'acquaintance of a day,
Alone to meet her at the midnight hour!

This assignation
(*Shows a letter*)
—the assassin freed!
Her manifest affection for the youth,
Might breed suspicion in a husband's brain,
Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded:
Much more in mine. Matilda never loved me.
Let no man, after me, a woman wed
Whose heart he knows he has not, tho' she brings
A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry;
For let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,
Cold and contemplative—he cannot trust her.
She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him—
The worst of sorrows, and the worst of shames!

GLENALVON. Yield not, my lord, to such afflicting thoughts,
But let the spirit of an husband sleep
Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.
This billet must to blooming Norval go:
At the next turn awaits my trusty spy;
I'll give it him refitted for his master.
In the close thicket take your secret stand;
The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may judge
Of their behavior.

LORD RANDOLPH. Thou dost counsel well.

GLENALVON. Permit me now to make one slight essay.
Of all the trophies which vain mortals boast,
By wit, by valor, or by wisdom won,
The first and fairest in a young man's eye,
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind,
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves,
Air-born, exalted above vulgar men.

LORD RANDOLPH. And what avails this maxim?

GLENALVON. Much, my lord.
Withdraw a little; I'll accost young Norval,
And with ironical, derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble Norval by thy favor raised,
Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonished from me;
But if he be the favorite of the fair,
Loved by the first of Caledonia's dames,
He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
Upon the hunter's spear.

LORD RANDOLPH. 'Tis shrewdly thought.

GLENALVON. When we grow loud, draw near. But let my lord
His rising wrath restrain.
Exit RANDOLPH
—'Tis strange, by Heav'n!
That she should run full tilt her fond career
To one so little known—she too that seemed
Pure as the winter stream when ice, embossed,
Whitens its course. Even did I think her chaste,
Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex!
Whose deeds lascivious pass Glenalvon's thoughts!

NORVAL *appears*

—His port I love; he's in a proper mood
To chide the thunder if at him it roared.
—Has Norval seen the troops?

NORVAL. The setting sun
With yellow radiance lightened all the vale;
And as the warriors moved, each polished helm,
Corslet, or spear, glanced back his gilded beams.
The hill they climbed, and halting at its top,
Of more than mortal size, tow'ring, they seemed
An host angelic, clad in burning arms.

GLENALVON. Thou talk'st it well; no leader of our host
In sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

NORVAL. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely, since no part is mine
Of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

GLENALVON. You wrong yourself, brave sir; your martial deeds

Have ranked you with the great.—But mark me, Norval;
Lord Randolph's favor now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service.
Let me, who know these soldiers, counsel you:
Give them all honor; seem not to command,
Else they will scarcely brook your late sprung power,
Which nor alliance props nor birth adorns.
NORVAL. Sir, I have been accustomed all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth;
And tho' I have been told that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their scorn,
Yet in such language I am little skilled.
Therefore I thank Glenalvon for his counsel,
Altho' it sounded harshly. Why remind
Me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms?
GLENALVON. I did not mean
To gall your pride, which now I see is great.
NORVAL. My pride!
GLENALVON. Suppress it, as you wish to prosper.
Your pride's excessive; yet, for Randolph's sake,
I will not leave you to its rash direction.
If thus you swell and frown at high-born men,
Will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?
NORVAL. A shepherd's scorn!
GLENALVON. Yes; if you presume
To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,
As if you took the measure of their minds
And said in secret, You're no match for me,
What will become of you?
NORVAL. (*Aside*) If this were told!
—Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?
GLENALVON. Ha! dost thou threaten me?
NORVAL. Didst thou not hear?
GLENALVON. Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe
Had not been questioned thus. But such as thee—
NORVAL. Whom dost thou think me?
GLENALVON. Norval.
NORVAL. So I am.
—And who is Norval in Glenalvon's eyes?
GLENALVON. A peasant's son, a wandering beggar-boy;
At best no more, even if he speaks the truth.
NORVAL. False as thou art, dost thou suspect my truth?
GLENALVON. Thy truth! thou'rt all a lie! and false as hell
Is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.
NORVAL. If I were chained, unarmed, and bed-rid old,
Perhaps I should revile; but as I am,
I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval
Is of a race who strive not but with deeds.
Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valor
And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
I'd tell thee—what thou art. I know thee well.
GLENALVON. Dost thou not know Glenalvon, born to command
Ten thousand slaves like thee?
NORVAL. [*Draws*] —Villain, no more!
Draw and defend thy life. I did design
To have defied thee in another cause;
But Heav'n accelerates its vengeance on thee.
Now for my own and Lady Randolph's wrongs!

Enter LORD RANDOLPH

LORD RANDOLPH. Hold, I command you both! The man that stirs
Makes me his foe.
NORVAL. Another voice than thine
That threat had vainly sounded, noble Randolph.
GLENALVON. Hear him, my lord; he's wond'rous condescending!
Mark the humility of shepherd Norval!
NORVAL. (*Sheathes his sword*) Now you may scoff in safety.

LORD RANDOLPH. Speak not thus,
Taunting each other, but unfold to me
The cause of quarrel; then I judge betwixt you.
NORVAL. Nay, my good lord, tho' I revere you much,
My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.
I blush to speak; I will not, cannot speak
Th'opprobrious words that I from him have borne.
To the liege-lord of my dear native land
I owe a subject's homage, but ev'n him
And his high arbitration I'd reject.
Within my bosom reigns another lord—
Honor, sole judge, and umpire of itself.
If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph,
Revoke your favors, and let Norval go
Hence as he came, alone but not dishonored.
LORD RANDOLPH. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial voice.
The ancient foe of Caledonia's land
Now waves his banners o'er her frighted fields.
Suspend your purpose till your country's arms
Repel the bold invader; then decide
The private quarrel.
GLENALVON. I agree to this.
NORVAL. And I.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. The banquet waits.
LORD RANDOLPH. We come.
Exit [LORD RANDOLPH] *with* Servant
GLENALVON. Norval,
Let not our variance mar the social hour,
Nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph.
Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate,
Shall stain my countenance. Soothe thou thy brow,
Nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.
NORVAL. Think not so lightly, sir, of my resentment.
When we contend again, our strife is mortal.
Exeunt

ACT V

SCENE I. *The wood*

Enter DOUGLAS

DOUGLAS. This is the place, the centre of the grove;
Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
How sweet and solemn is this midnight scene!
The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way
Thro' skies where I could count each little star.
The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves!
The river, rushing o'er its pebbled bed,
Imposes silence with a stilly sound.
In such a place as this, at such an hour,
If ancestry can be in aught believed,
Descending spirits have conversed with man,
And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter OLD NORVAL

OLD NORVAL. 'Tis he! But what if he should chide me hence?
His just reproach I fear.
(DOUGLAS *turns aside and sees him*)
Forgive, forgive!
Canst thou forgive the man, the selfish man
Who bred Sir Malcolm's heir a shepherd's son?
DOUGLAS. Kneel not to me; thou art my father still.
Thy wished-for presence now completes my joy.
Welcome to me, my fortunes thou shalt share,
And ever honored with thy Douglas live.
OLD NORVAL. And dost thou call me father? O my son!
I think that I could die, to make amends
For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime
Which in the wilderness so long concealed
The blossom of thy youth.
DOUGLAS. Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blowed.

Amongst the shepherds, in the humble cote,
I learned some lessons which I'll not forget
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
The poor man's friend; and when my vassals bow,
Norval shall smooth the crested pride of Douglas.
OLD NORVAL. Let me but live to see thine exaltation!
Yet grievous are my fears. Oh, leave this place
And those unfriendly towers!
DOUGLAS. Why should I leave them?
OLD NORVAL. Lord Randolph and his kinsman seek your life.
DOUGLAS. How know'st thou that?
OLD NORVAL. I will inform you how:
When evening came, I left the secret place
Appointed for me by your mother's care,
And fondly trod in each accustomed path
That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I ranged,
I was alarmed with unexpected sounds
Of earnest voices. On the persons came.
Unseen I lurked, and overheard them name
Each other as they talked; Lord Randolph this,
And that Glenalvon. Still of you they spoke,
And of the lady; threatening was their speech,
Tho' but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discov'ry,
And ever and anon they vowed revenge.
DOUGLAS. Revenge! for what?
OLD NORVAL. For being what you are—
Sir Malcolm's heir: how else have you offended?
When they were gone, I hied me to my cottage,
And there sat musing how I best might find
Means to inform you of their wicked purpose;
But I could think of none. At last, perplexed,
I issued forth, encompassing the tower
With many a wearied step and wishful look.
Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
The caution which I give.
DOUGLAS. I scorn it not.
My mother warned me of Glenalvon's baseness,
But I will not suspect the noble Randolph.
In our encounter with the vile assassins,
I marked his brave demeanor; him I'll trust.
OLD NORVAL. I fear you will too far.
DOUGLAS. Here in this place
I wait my mother's coming. She shall know
What thou hast told; her counsel I will follow—
And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
You must depart; your presence may prevent
Our interview.
OLD NORVAL. My blessing rest upon thee!
Oh, may Heav'n's hand, which saved thee from the wave
And from the sword of foes, be near thee still!
Turning mischance, if aught hangs o'er thy head,
All upon mine! *Exit* OLD NORVAL
DOUGLAS. He loves me like a parent,
And must not, shall not, lose the son he loves,
Altho' his son has found a nobler father.
—Eventful day! how hast thou changed my state!
Once on the cold and winter-shaded side
Of a bleak hill mischance had rooted me,
Never to thrive, child of another soil;
Transplanted now to the gay, sunny vale,
Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers.
Ye glorious stars! high heav'n's resplendent host!
To whom I oft have of my lot complained,
Hear and record my soul's unaltered wish:
Dead or alive, let me but be renowned!
May Heav'n inspire some fierce, gigantic Dane,
To give a bold defiance to our host!
Before he speaks it out I will accept;
Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH

LADY RANDOLPH. My son! I heard a voice—
DOUGLAS. The voice was mine.
LADY RANDOLPH. (*Embracing him*) Didst thou complain aloud to Nature's ear,
That thus in dusky shades, at midnight hours,
By stealth the mother and the son should meet?
DOUGLAS. No; on this happy day, this better birthday,
My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy.
LADY RANDOLPH. Sad fear and melancholy still divide
The empire of my breast with hope and joy.
Now hear what I advise—
DOUGLAS. First, let me tell
What may the tenor of your counsel change.
LADY RANDOLPH. My heart forebodes some evil.
DOUGLAS. 'Tis not good.
—At eve, unseen by Randolph and Glenalvon,
The good old Norval in the grove o'erheard
Their conversation; oft they mentioned me
With dreadful threat'nings; you they sometimes named.
'Twas strange, they said—a wonderful discov'ry;
And ever and anon they vowed revenge.
LADY RANDOLPH. Defend us, gracious God! we are betrayed!
They have found out the secret of thy birth!
It must be so. That is the great discovery.
Sir Malcolm's heir is come to claim his own,
And they will be revenged. Perhaps even now,
Armed and prepared for murder, they but wait
A darker and more silent hour, to break
Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.
This moment, this, Heav'n hath ordain'd to save thee!
Fly to the camp, my son!
DOUGLAS. And leave you here?
No: to the castle let us go together.
Call up the ancient servants of your house,
Who in their youth did eat your father's bread.
Then tell them loudly that I am your son.
If in the breasts of men one spark remains
Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,
Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few
To drive those spoilers from my father's house.
LADY RANDOLPH. Oh, Nature, Nature! what can check thy force?
—Thou genuine offspring of the daring Douglas!
But rush not on destruction; save thyself,
And I am safe. To me they mean no harm.
Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.
—That winding path conducts thee to the river.
Cross where thou seest a broad and beaten way,
Which running eastward leads thee to the camp.
Instant demand admittance to Lord Douglas;
Show him these jewels which his brother wore.
Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the truth,
Which I by a certain proof will soon confirm.
DOUGLAS. I yield me, and obey; but yet my heart
Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay
And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read
Of wondrous deeds by one bold arm achieved.
Our foes are two—no more; let me go forth,
And see if any shield can guard Glenalvon.
LADY RANDOLPH. If thou regard'st thy mother, or rever'st
Thy father's mem'ry, think of this no more!
One thing I have to say before we part:
Long wert thou lost; and thou art found, my child,
In a most fearful season. War and battle
[I] have great cause to dread. Too well I see
Which way the current of thy temper sets.
To-day I've found thee. Oh! my long-lost hope!
If thou to giddy valor giv'st the reign,
To-morrow I may lose my son forever!
The love of thee, before thou saw'st the light,

Sustained my life when thy brave father fell.
If thou shalt fall, I have nor love nor hope
In this waste world!—My son, remember me!

DOUGLAS. What shall I say? How can I give you comfort?
The God of battles of my life dispose
As may be best for you! for whose dear sake
I will not bear myself as I resolved.
But yet consider; as no vulgar name
That which I boast sounds amongst martial men,
How will inglorious caution suit my claim?
The post of fate unshrinking I maintain.
My country's foes must witness who I am.
On the invaders' heads I'll prove my birth,
Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.
If in this strife I fall, blame not your son,
Who, if he lives not honored, must not live.

LADY RANDOLPH. I will not utter what my bosom feels.
Too well I love that valor which I warn.
Farewell, my son! my counsels are but vain,
(*Embracing*)
And as high Heav'n hath will'd it, all must be. (*They separate*)
—Gaze not on me; thou wilt mistake the path!
I'll point it out again.

Just as they are separating, enter from the wood LORD RANDOLPH *and* GLENALVON

LORD RANDOLPH. Not in her presence. Now—

GLENALVON. I'm prepared.

LORD RANDOLPH. No! I command thee stay.
I go alone: it never shall be said
That I took odds to combat mortal man.
The noblest vengeance is the most complete.
Exit [LORD RANDOLPH]

(GLENALVON *makes some steps to the same side of the stage, listens, and speaks*)

GLENALVON. Demons of death, come, settle on my sword,
And to a double slaughter guide it home!
The lover and the husband both must die.

LORD RANDOLPH. (*Behind the scenes*) Draw, villain! draw!

DOUGLAS. (*Without*) Assail me not, Lord Randolph—
Not as thou lov'st thyself!
(*Clashing of swords*)

GLENALVON. (*Running out*) Now is the time.

Enter LADY RANDOLPH, *at the opposite side of the stage, faint and breathless*

LADY RANDOLPH. Lord Randolph, hear me; all shall be thine own!
But spare! oh, spare my son!

Enter DOUGLAS, *with a sword in each hand*

DOUGLAS. My mother's voice!
I can protect thee still.

LADY RANDOLPH. He lives, he lives!
For this, for this, to Heav'n eternal praise!
But sure I saw thee fall.

DOUGLAS. It was Glenalvon.
Just as my arm had mastered Randolph's sword,
The villain came behind me; but I slew him.

LADY RANDOLPH. Behind thee!—ah, thou'rt wounded! O my child,
How pale thou look'st! And shall I lose thee now?

DOUGLAS. Do not despair. I feel a little faintness;
I hope it will not last.
(*Leans upon his sword*)

LADY RANDOLPH. There is no hope!
—And we must part! The hand of Death is on thee!
O my belovèd child! O Douglas, Douglas!

(DOUGLAS *growing more and more faint*)

DOUGLAS. Too soon we part. I have not long been Douglas.
O Destiny! hardly thou deal'st with me;
Clouded and hid, a stranger to myself,
In low and poor obscurity I lived.

LADY RANDOLPH. Has Heav'n preserv'd thee for an end like this?

DOUGLAS. Oh! had I fallen as my brave fathers fell,

Turning with fatal arm the tide of battle!
Like them I should have smiled and welcomed death.
But thus to perish by a villain's hand!
Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,
Which never mortal was so fond to run.

LADY RANDOLPH. Hear, Justice; hear! are these the fruits of virtue?

(DOUGLAS *falls*)

DOUGLAS. Unknown I die; no tongue shall speak of me.
Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,
May yet conjecture what I might have proved,
And think life only wanting to my fame:
But who shall comfort thee?

LADY RANDOLPH. Despair, despair!

DOUGLAS. Oh, had it pleased high Heav'n to let me live
A little while!—My eyes that gaze on thee
Grow dim apace! my mother.

(DOUGLAS *dies*; [LADY RANDOLPH *swoons*])

Enter LORD RANDOLPH *and* ANNA

LORD RANDOLPH. Thy words, thy words of truth, have pierced my heart;
I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.
Oh! if my brave deliverer survives
The traitor's sword—

ANNA. Alas! look there, my lord.

LORD RANDOLPH. The mother and her son!
—How curst I am!
Was I the cause? No: I was not the cause.
Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul
To frantic jealousy.

ANNA. My lady lives:
The agony of grief hath but suppressed
Awhile her powers.

LORD RANDOLPH. But my deliverer's dead.
The world did once esteem Lord Randolph well,
Sincere of heart, for spotless honor famed:
And, in my early days, glory I gained
Beneath the holy banner of the cross.
Now past the noon of life, shame comes upon me.
Reproach and infamy and public hate
Are near at hand, for all mankind will think
That Randolph basely stabbed Sir Malcolm's heir.

LADY RANDOLPH. (*Recovering*) Where am I now? Still in this wretched world?
—Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.
My youth was worn in anguish; but Youth's strength,
With Hope's assistance, bore the brunt of sorrow,
And trained me on to be the object now
On which Omnipotence displays itself,
Making a spectacle—a tale of me,
To awe its vassal, man.

LORD RANDOLPH. O misery!
Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim
My innocence.

LADY RANDOLPH. Thy innocence!

LORD RANDOLPH. My guilt
Is innocence compared with what thou think'st it.

LADY RANDOLPH. Of thee I think not: what have I to do
With thee, or anything? My son! my son!
My beautiful! my brave! how proud was I
Of thee and of thy valor! my fond heart
O'erflowed this day with transport when I thought
Of growing old amidst a race of thine,
Who might make up to me their father's childhood
And bear my brother's and my husband's name.
Now all my hopes are dead! A little while
Was I a wife! a mother not so long!
What am I now?—I know.—But I shall be
That only whilst I please; for such a son
And such a husband drive me to my fate.

(*Runs out*)

LORD RANDOLPH. Follow her, Anna! I myself would follow,
But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

Exit ANNA

Enter OLD NORVAL

OLD NORVAL. I heard the voice of woe. Heaven guard my child!

LORD RANDOLPH. Already is the idle gaping crowd,

The spiteful vulgar, come to gaze on Randolph.
Begone!
OLD NORVAL. I fear thee not. I will not go.
Here I'll remain. I'm an accomplice, lord,
With thee in murder. Yes, my sins did help
To crush down to the ground this lovely plant.
O noblest youth that ever yet was born!
Sweetest and best, gentlest and bravest spirit
That ever blest the world! Wretch that I am,
Who saw that noble spirit swell and rise
Above the narrow limits that confined it!
Yet never was by all thy virtues won
To do thee justice, and reveal the secret
Which, timely known, had raised thee far above
The villain's snare. Oh! I am punished now!
These are the hairs that should have strewed the ground,
And not the locks of Douglas.
(Tears his hair, and throws himself upon the ground)
LORD RANDOLPH. I know thee now; thy boldness I forgive.
My crest is fallen. For thee I will appoint
A place of rest, if grief will let thee rest.
I will reward, altho' I cannot punish.
Curst, curst Glenalvon! he escaped too well,
Tho' slain and baffled by the hand he hated.
Foaming with rage and fury to the last,
Cursing his conqueror, the felon died.

Enter ANNA

ANNA. My lord! My lord!
LORD RANDOLPH. Speak: I can hear of horror.
ANNA. Horror, indeed!
LORD RANDOLPH. Matilda?
ANNA. Is no more:
She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill,
Nor halted till the precipice she gained,
Beneath whose low'ring top the river falls
Engulfed in rifted rocks: thither she came,
As fearless as the eagle lights upon it,
And headlong down—
LORD RANDOLPH. 'Twas I alas! 'twas I
That filled her breast with fury—drove her down
The precipice of death! Wretch that I am!
ANNA. Oh, had you seen her last despairing look!
Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
Down on the deep; then lifting up her head
And her white hands to Heaven, seeming to say,
Why am I forced to this? she plunged herself
Into the empty air.
LORD RANDOLPH. I will not vent
In vain complaints the passion of my soul.
Peace in this world I never can enjoy.
These wounds the gratitude of Randolph gave;
They speak aloud and with the voice of fate
Denounce my doom. I am resolved. I'll go
Straight to the battle, where the man that makes
Me turn aside must threaten worse than death.
Thou, faithful to my mistress, take this ring,
Full warrant of my power. Let every rite
With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait;
For Randolph hopes he never shall return.
Exeunt

EPILOGUE

An Epilogue I asked; but not one word
Our bard will write. He vows 'tis most absurd
With comic wit to contradict the strain
Of tragedy and make your sorrows vain.
Sadly he says that pity is the best
And noblest passion of the human breast:
For when its sacred streams the heart o'erflow,
In gushes pleasure with the tide of woe;
And when its waves retire, like those of Nile,
They leave behind him such a golden soil,
That there the virtues without culture grow,
There the sweet blossoms of affection blow.
These were his words; void of delusive art,
I felt them, for he spoke them from his heart.
Nor will I now attempt, with witty folly,
To chase away celestial melancholy.

THE GOOD-NATURED MAN

A Comedy by Oliver Goldsmith

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Mr. Honeywood
Croaker
Lofty
Sir William Honeywood
Leontine [Croaker's son]
Jarvis
Butler
Bailiff
Dubardieu
Postboy

Women

Miss Richland
Olivia
Mrs. Croaker
Garnet
Landlady

Scene: *London*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

PREFACE

When I undertook to write a comedy, I confess I was strongly prepossessed in favor of the poets of the last age, and strove to imitate them. The term "genteel comedy" was then unknown amongst us, and little more was desired by an audience than nature and humor, in whatever walks of life they were most conspicuous. The author of the following scenes never imagined that more would be expected of him, and therefore to delineate character has been his principal aim. Those who know anything of composition are sensible that, in pursuing humor, it will sometimes lead us into the recesses of the mean; I was even tempted to look for it in the master of a sponging-house: but in deference to the public taste, grown of late, perhaps, too delicate, the scene of the bailiffs was retrenched in the representation. In deference also to the judgment of a few friends, who think in a particular way, the scene is here restored. The author submits it to the reader in his closet; and hopes that too much refinement will not banish humor and character from ours, as it has already done from the French theatre. Indeed, the French comedy is now become so very elevated and sentimental, that it has not only banished humor and Molière from the stage, but it has banished all spectators too.

Upon the whole, the author returns his thanks to the public for the favorable reception which *The Good-Natured Man* has met with, and to Mr. Colman in particular for his kindness to it. It may not also be improper to assure any who shall hereafter write for the theatre that merit, or supposed merit, will ever be a sufficient passport to his protection.

PROLOGUE

Written by Dr. Johnson; spoken by Mr. Bensley

Pressed by the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the general toil of human kind;
With cool submission joins the laboring train,
And social sorrow loses half its pain:
Our anxious bard, without complaint, may share
This bustling season's epidemic care,
Like Cæsar's pilot, dignified by fate,
Tossed in one common storm with all the great;
Distressed alike, the statesman and the wit,
When one a borough courts, and one the pit,
The busy candidates for power and fame
Have hopes, and fears, and wishes, just the same;
Disabled both to combat, or to fly,
Must hear all taunts, and hear without reply.

Unchecked on both, loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
The offended burgess hoards his angry tale
For that blest year when all that vote may rail;
Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss
Till that glad night when all that hate may hiss.
"This day the powdered curls and golden coat,"
Says swelling Crispin, "begged a cobbler's vote."
"This night our wit," the pert apprentice cries,
"Lies at my feet—I hiss him, and he dies."
The great, 'tis true, can charm the electing tribe;
The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.
Yet judged by those whose voices ne'er were sold,
He feels no want of ill-persuading gold;
But confident of praise, if praise be due,
Trusts without fear, to merit, and to you.

ACT I

SCENE. *An apartment in young* HONEYWOOD'S *house*

Enter SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD *and* JARVIS

SIR WILLIAM. Good Jarvis, make no apologies for this honest bluntness. Fidelity like yours is the best excuse for every freedom.

JARVIS. I can't help being blunt, and being very angry too, when I hear you talk of disinheriting so good, so worthy a young gentleman as your nephew, my master. All the world loves him.

SIR WILLIAM. Say rather, that he loves all the world; that is his fault.

JARVIS. I'm sure there is no part of it more dear to him than you are, though he has not seen you since he was a child.

SIR WILLIAM. What signifies his affection to me; or how can I be proud of a place in a heart where every sharper and coxcomb find an easy entrance?

JARVIS. I grant you that he's rather too good-natured; that he's too much every man's man; that he laughs this minute with one, and cries the next with another: but whose instructions may he thank for all this?

SIR WILLIAM. Not mine, sure! My letters to him during my employment in Italy taught him only that philosophy which might prevent, not defend, his errors.

JARVIS. Faith, begging your honor's pardon, I'm sorry they taught him any philosophy at all; it has only served to spoil him. This same philosophy is a good horse in the stable, but an arrant jade on a journey. For my own part, whenever I hear him mention the name on't, I'm always sure he's going to play the fool.

SIR WILLIAM. Don't let us ascribe his faults to his philosophy, I entreat you. No, Jarvis, his good-nature arises rather from his fears of offending the importunate than his desire of making the deserving happy.

JARVIS. What it rises from, I don't know. But, to be sure, everybody has it that asks it.

SIR WILLIAM. Aye, or that does not ask it. I have been now for some time a concealed spectator of his follies, and find them as boundless as his dissipation.

JARVIS. And yet, faith, he has some fine name or other for them all. He calls his extravagance, generosity; and his trusting everybody, universal benevolence. It was but last week he went security for a fellow whose face he scarce knew, and that he called an act of exalted mu—mu—munificence; aye, that was the name he gave it.

SIR WILLIAM. And upon that I proceed, as my last effort, though with very little hopes to reclaim him. That very fellow has just absconded, and I have taken up the security. Now, my intention is to involve him in fictitious distress before he has plunged himself into real calamity—to arrest him for that very debt; to clap an officer upon him, and then let him see which of his friends will come to his relief.

JARVIS. Well, if I could but any way see him thoroughly vexed, every groan of his would be music to me; yet faith, I believe it impossible. I have tried to fret him myself every morning these three years; but, instead of being angry, he sits as calmly to hear me scold as he does to his hair-dresser.

SIR WILLIAM. We must try him once more, however, and I'll go this instant to put my scheme into execution; and I don't despair of succeeding, as, by your means, I can have frequent opportunities of being about him without being known. What a pity it is, Jarvis, that any man's goodwill to others should produce so much neglect of himself as to require correction! Yet we must touch his weakness with a delicate hand. There are some faults so nearly allied to excellence that we can scarce weed out the vice without eradicating the virtue. *Exit*

JARVIS. Well, go thy ways, Sir William Honeywood. It is not without reason that the world allows thee to be the best of men. —But here comes his hopeful nephew; the strange good-natured, foolish, open-hearted —and yet, all his faults are such that one loves him still the better for them. 91

Enter HONEYWOOD

HONEYWOOD. Well, Jarvis, what messages from my friends this morning?

JARVIS. You have no friends.

HONEYWOOD. Well, from my acquaintance then? 96

JARVIS. (*Pulling out bills*) A few of our usual cards of compliment; that's all. This bill from your tailor, this from your mercer, and this from the little broker in Crooked-lane. He says he has been at a great deal of trouble to get back the money you borrowed.

HONEYWOOD. That I don't know; but I'm sure we were at a great deal of trouble in getting him to lend it. 105

JARVIS. He has lost all patience.

HONEYWOOD. Then he has lost a very good thing.

JARVIS. There's that ten guineas you were sending to the poor gentleman and his children in the Fleet.[1] I believe that would stop his mouth for a while at least. 112

HONEYWOOD. Aye, Jarvis, but what will fill their mouths in the meantime? Must I be cruel because he happens to be importunate; and, to relieve his avarice, leave them to insupportable distress? 117

JARVIS. 'Sdeath! Sir, the question now is how to relieve yourself—yourself!—Haven't I reason to be out of my senses when I see things going at sixes and sevens? 121

HONEYWOOD. Whatever reason you may have for being out of your senses, I hope you'll allow that I'm not quite unreasonable for continuing in mine. 125

JARVIS. You're the only man alive in your present situation that could do so—everything upon the waste. There's Miss Richland and her fine fortune gone already, and upon the point of being given to your rival—

HONEYWOOD. I'm no man's rival. 131

JARVIS. Your uncle in Italy preparing to disinherit you; your own fortune almost spent; and nothing but pressing creditors, false friends, and a pack of drunken servants that your kindness has made unfit for any other family. 137

HONEYWOOD. Then they have the more occasion for being in mine.

JARVIS. Soh! What will you have done with him that I caught stealing your plate in the pantry—in the fact; I caught him in the fact.

HONEYWOOD. In the fact? If so, I really think that we should pay him his wages and turn him off. 145

JARVIS. He shall be turned off at Tyburn, the dog; we'll hang him, if it be only to frighten the rest of the family.

HONEYWOOD. No, Jarvis. It's enough that we have lost what he has stolen; let us not add to it the loss of a fellow-creature! 151

JARVIS. Very fine!—Well, here was the footman just now, to complain of the butler: he says he does most work and ought to have most wages. 155

HONEYWOOD. That's but just; tho' perhaps here comes the butler to complain of the footman.

[1] Fleet Prison.

JARVIS. Aye, it's the way with them all, from the scullion to the privy-councillor. If they have a bad master, they keep quarrelling with him; if they have a good master, they keep quarrelling with one another.

Enter Butler, *drunk*

BUTLER. Sir, I'll not stay in the family with Jonathan. You must part with him, or part with me; that's the ex—ex—exposition of the matter, sir.

HONEYWOOD. Full and explicit enough. But what's his fault, good Philip?

BUTLER. Sir, he's given to drinking, sir, and I shall have my morals corrupted by keeping such company.

HONEYWOOD. Ha! ha! he has such a diverting way—

JARVIS. Oh, quite amusing.

BUTLER. I find my wines a-going, sir, and liquors don't go without mouths, sir. I hate a drunkard, sir.

HONEYWOOD. Well, well, Philip, I'll hear you upon that another time; so go to bed now.

JARVIS. To bed! let him go to the devil.

BUTLER. Begging your honor's pardon, and begging your pardon, master Jarvis, I'll not go to bed, nor to the devil neither. I have enough to do to mind my cellar.—I forgot, your honor; Mr. Croaker is below. I came on purpose to tell you.

HONEYWOOD. Why didn't you show him up, blockhead?

BUTLER. Show him up, sir! With all my heart, sir. Up or down, all's one to me.

Exit

JARVIS. Aye, we have one or other of that family in this house from morning till night. He comes on the old affair, I suppose—the match between his son that's just returned from Paris and Miss Richland, the young lady he's guardian to.

HONEYWOOD. Perhaps so. Mr. Croaker, knowing my friendship for the young lady, has got it into his head that I can persuade her to what I please.

JARVIS. Ah! if you loved yourself but half as well as she loves you, we should soon see a marriage that would set all things to rights again.

HONEYWOOD. Love me! Sure, Jarvis, you dream. No, no; her intimacy with me never amounted to more than mere friendship—mere friendship. That she is the most lovely woman that ever warmed the human heart with desire, I own. But never let me harbor a thought of making her unhappy by a connection with one so unworthy her merits as I am. No, Jarvis, it shall be my study to serve her even in spite of my wishes, and to secure her happiness though it destroys my own.

JARVIS. Was ever the like? I want patience.

HONEYWOOD. Besides, Jarvis, though I could obtain Miss Richland's consent, do you think I could succeed with her guardian, or Mrs. Croaker, his wife—who, tho' both very fine in their way, are yet a little opposite in their dispositions, you know?

JARVIS. Opposite enough, Heaven knows! the very reverse of each other: she, all laugh and no joke; he, always complaining and never sorrowful—a fretful poor soul, that has a new distress for every hour in the four and twenty—

HONEYWOOD. Hush, hush! he's coming up; he'll hear you.

JARVIS. One whose voice is a passing bell—

HONEYWOOD. Well, well; go, do!

JARVIS. A raven that bodes nothing but mischief; a coffin and cross-bones; a bundle of rue; a sprig of deadly night-shade; a—

(HONEYWOOD, *stopping his mouth, at last pushes him off*)

Exit JARVIS

HONEYWOOD. I must own, my old monitor is not entirely wrong. There is something in my friend Croaker's conversation that quite depresses me. His very mirth is an antidote to all gaiety, and his appearance has a stronger effect on my spirits than an undertaker's shop—

Enter CROAKER

Mr. Croaker, this is such a satisfaction—

CROAKER. A pleasant morning to Mr. Honeywood, and many of them. How is this! you look most shockingly to-day, my dear friend. I hope this weather does not affect your spirits. To be sure, if this weather continues—I say nothing—but God send we be all better this day three months!

HONEYWOOD. I heartily concur in the wish, tho' I own not in your apprehensions.

CROAKER. Maybe not. Indeed, what signifies what weather we have in a country going to ruin like ours? Taxes rising and trade falling. Money flying out of the kingdom, and Jesuits swarming into it. I know at this time no less than a hundred and twenty-seven Jesuits between Charing Cross and Temple Bar.

HONEYWOOD. The Jesuits will scarce pervert you or me, I should hope.

CROAKER. Maybe not. Indeed, what signifies whom they pervert in a country that has scarce any religion to lose? I'm only afraid for our wives and daughters.

HONEYWOOD. I have no apprehensions for the ladies, I assure you.

CROAKER. Maybe not. Indeed, what signifies whether they be perverted or no? The women in my time were good for something. I have seen a lady dressed from top to toe in her own manufactures formerly; but now-a-days the devil a thing of their own manufactures about them, except their faces.

HONEYWOOD. But, however these faults may be practised abroad, you don't find them at home, either with Mrs. Croaker, Olivia, or Miss Richland.

CROAKER. The best of them will never be canonised for a saint when she's dead. By the bye, my dear friend, I don't find this match between Miss Richland and my son much relished, either by one side or t'other.

HONEYWOOD. I thought otherwise.

CROAKER. Ah, Mr. Honeywood, a little of your fine serious advice to the young lady might go far. I know she has a very exalted opinion of your understanding.

HONEYWOOD. But would not that be usurping an authority that more properly belongs to yourself?

CROAKER. My dear friend, you know but little of my authority at home. People think, indeed, because they see me come out in a morning thus, with a pleasant face, and to make my friends merry, that all's well within. But I have cares that would break an heart of stone. My wife has so encroached upon every one of my privileges that I'm now no more than a mere lodger in my own house.

HONEYWOOD. But a little spirit exerted on your side might perhaps restore your authority.

CROAKER. No, though I had the spirit of a lion! I do rouse sometimes. But what then? always haggling and haggling. A man is tired of getting the better before his wife is tired of losing the victory.

HONEYWOOD. It's a melancholy consideration, indeed, that our chief comforts often produce our greatest anxieties, and that an increase of our possessions is but an inlet to new disquietudes.

CROAKER. Ah, my dear friend, these were the very words of poor Dick Doleful to me not a week before he made away with himself. Indeed, Mr. Honeywood, I never see you but you put me in mind of poor Dick. Ah, there was merit neglected for you! and so true a friend; we loved each other for thirty years, and yet he never asked me to lend him a single farthing.

HONEYWOOD. Pray, what could induce him to commit so rash an action at last?

CROAKER. I don't know. Some people were malicious enough to say it was keeping company with me, because we used to meet now and then and open our hearts to each other. To be sure I loved to hear him talk, and he loved to hear me talk; poor, dear Dick! He used to say that Croaker rhymed to joker; and so we used to laugh.—Poor Dick! *(Going to cry)*

HONEYWOOD. His fate affects me.

CROAKER. Ah, he grew sick of this miserable life, where we do nothing but eat and grow hungry, dress and undress, get up and lie down; while reason, that should watch like a nurse by our side, falls as fast asleep as we do.

HONEYWOOD. To say truth, if we compare that part of life which is to come by that which we have passed, the prospect is hideous.

CROAKER. Life at the greatest and best is but a froward child, that must be humored and coaxed a little till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over.

HONEYWOOD. Very true, sir; nothing can exceed the vanity of our existence but the folly of our pursuits. We wept when we came into the world, and every day tells us why.

CROAKER. Ah, my dear friend, it is a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with you. My son Leontine shan't lose the benefit of such fine conversation; I'll just step home for him. I am willing to show him so much seriousness in one scarce older than himself. —And what if I bring my last letter to the *Gazetteer* on the increase and progress of earthquakes? It will amuse us, I promise you. I there prove how the late earthquake is coming round to pay us another visit, from London to Lisbon, from Lisbon to the Canary Islands, from the Canary Islands to Palmyra, from Palmyra to Constantinople. and so from Constantinople back to London again. *Exit*

HONEYWOOD. Poor Croaker! his situation deserves the utmost pity. I shall scarce recover my spirits these three days. Sure to live upon such terms is worse than death itself! And yet, when I consider my own situation—a broken fortune, an hopeless passion, friends in distress, the wish but not the power to serve them—(*Pausing and sighing*)

Enter Butler

BUTLER. More company below, sir—Mrs. Croaker and Miss Richland. Shall I show them up?—But they're showing up themselves. *Exit*

Enter MRS. CROAKER *and* MISS RICHLAND

MISS RICHLAND. You're always in such spirits.

MRS. CROAKER. We have just come, my dear Honeywood, from the auction. There was the old, deaf dowager, as usual, bidding like a fury against herself. And then so curious in antiques!—herself the most genuine piece of antiquity in the whole collection.

HONEYWOOD. Excuse me, ladies, if some uneasiness from friendship makes me unfit to share in this good-humor. I know you'll pardon me.

MRS. CROAKER. I vow, he seems as melancholy as if he had taken a dose of my husband this morning.—Well, if Richland here can pardon you, I must.

MISS RICHLAND. You would seem to insinuate, madam, that I have particular reasons for being disposed to refuse it.

MRS. CROAKER. Whatever I insinuate, my dear, don't be so ready to wish an explanation.

MISS RICHLAND. I own I should be sorry Mr. Honeywood's long friendship and mine should be misunderstood.

HONEYWOOD. There's no answering for others, madam. But I hope you'll never find me presuming to offer more than the most delicate friendship may readily allow.

MISS RICHLAND. And I shall be prouder of such a tribute from you than the most passionate professions from others.

HONEYWOOD. My own sentiments, madam. Friendship is a disinterested commerce between equals; love, an abject intercourse between tyrants and slaves.

MISS RICHLAND. And, without a compliment, I know none more disinterested, or more capable of friendship, than Mr. Honeywood.

MRS. CROAKER. And, indeed, I know nobody that has more friends, at least among the ladies. Miss Fruzz, Miss Odbody, and Miss Winterbottom praise him in all companies. As for Miss Biddy Bundle, she's his professed admirer.

MISS RICHLAND. Indeed! an admirer! I did not know, sir, you were such a favorite there. But is she seriously so handsome? Is she the mighty thing talked of?

HONEYWOOD. (*Smiling*) The town, madam, seldom begins to praise a lady's beauty till she's beginning to lose it.

MRS. CROAKER. But she's resolved never to lose it, it seems; for, as her natural face decays, her skill improves in making the artificial one. Well, nothing diverts me more than one of these fine, old, dressy things, who thinks to conceal her age by everywhere exposing her person; sticking herself up in the front of a side-box; trailing through a minuet at Almack's[1]; and then, in the public gardens, looking for all the world like one of the painted ruins of the place.

HONEYWOOD. Every age has its admirers, ladies. While you, perhaps, are trading among the warmer climates of youth, there ought to be some to carry on an useful commerce in the frozen latitudes beyond fifty.

MISS RICHLAND. But then the mortifications they must suffer before they can be fitted out for traffic! I have seen one of them fret an whole morning at her hairdresser, when all the fault was her face.

HONEYWOOD. And yet, I'll engage, has carried that face at last to a very good market. —This good-natured town, madam, has husbands, like spectacles, to fit every age, from fifteen to fourscore.

MRS. CROAKER. Well, you're a dear, good-natured creature. But you know you're engaged with us this morning upon a strolling party. I want to show Olivia the town, and the things; I believe I shall have business for you for the whole day.

HONEYWOOD. I am sorry, madam, I have an appointment with Mr. Croaker which it is impossible to put off.

MRS. CROAKER. What! with my husband? Then I'm resolved to take no refusal. Nay, I protest you must. You know I never laugh so much as with you.

HONEYWOOD. Why, if I must, I must. I'll swear, you have put me into such spirits. Well, do you find jest, and I'll find laugh, I promise you. We'll wait for the chariot in the next room. *Exeunt*

Enter LEONTINE *and* OLIVIA

LEONTINE. There they go, thoughtless and happy. My dearest Olivia, what would I give to see you capable of sharing in their amusements and as cheerful as they are!

OLIVIA. How, my Leontine, how can I be cheerful when I have so many terrors to oppress me? The fear of being detected by this family, and the apprehensions of a censuring world when I must be detected—

LEONTINE. The world, my love! what can it say? At worst it can only say that, being compelled by a mercenary guardian to embrace a life you disliked, you formed a resolution of flying with the man of your choice; that you confided in his honor, and took refuge in my father's house—the only one where yours could remain without censure.

OLIVIA. But consider, Leontine, your disobedience and my indiscretion—your being sent to France to bring home a sister, and, instead of a sister, bringing home—

LEONTINE. One dearer than a thousand sisters—one that I am convinced will be equally dear to the rest of the family when she comes to be known.

OLIVIA. And that, I fear, will shortly be.

LEONTINE. Impossible, till we ourselves think proper to make the discovery. My sister, you know, has been with her aunt, at Lyons, since she was a child, and you find every creature in the family takes you for her.

OLIVIA. But mayn't she write? mayn't her aunt write?

LEONTINE. Her aunt scarce ever writes, and all my sister's letters are directed to me.

OLIVIA. But won't your refusing Miss Richland, for whom you know the old gentleman intends you, create a suspicion?

LEONTINE. There—there's my masterstroke. I have resolved not to refuse her; nay, an hour hence I have consented to go with my father to make her an offer of my heart and fortune.

OLIVIA. Your heart and fortune!

LEONTINE. Don't be alarmed, my dearest. Can Olivia think so meanly of my honor or my love as to suppose I could ever hope for happiness from any but her? No, my Olivia, neither the force—nor, permit me to add, the delicacy of my passion—leave any room to suspect me. I only offer Miss Richland

[1] Assembly rooms on King Street; built in 1764.

an heart I am convinced she will refuse, as I am confident that, without knowing it, her affections are fixed upon Mr. Honeywood.

OLIVIA. Mr. Honeywood! You'll excuse my apprehensions, but when your merits come to be put in the balance— 541

LEONTINE. You view them with too much partiality. However, by making this offer, I show a seeming compliance with my father's commands; and, perhaps, upon her refusal, I may have his consent to choose for myself.

OLIVIA. Well, I submit. And yet, my Leontine, I own I shall envy her even your pretended addresses. I consider every look, every expression of your esteem, as due only to me. This is folly, perhaps; I allow it. But it is natural to suppose that merit which has made an impression on one's own heart, may be powerful over that of another. 554

LEONTINE. Don't, my life's treasure! don't let us make imaginary evils when you know we have so many real ones to encounter. At worst, you know, if Miss Richland should consent, or my father refuse his pardon, it can but end in a trip to Scotland; and—

Enter CROAKER

CROAKER. Where have you been, boy? I have been seeking you. My friend Honeywood here has been saying such comfortable things. Ah! he's an example indeed. Where is he? I left him here. 565

LEONTINE. Sir, I believe you may see him, and hear him too, in the next room; he's preparing to go out with the ladies.

CROAKER. Good gracious! can I believe my eyes or my ears! I'm struck dumb with his vivacity, and stunned with the loudness of his laugh. Was there ever such a transformation? (*A laugh behind the scenes.* CROAKER *mimics it*)—Ha! ha! ha! there it goes! A plague take their balderdash! Yet I could expect nothing less when my precious wife was of the party. On my conscience, I believe she could spread a horse-laugh through the pews of a tabernacle. 579

LEONTINE. Since you find so many objections to a wife, sir, how can you be so earnest in recommending one to me?

CROAKER. I have told you, and tell you again, boy, that Miss Richland's fortune must not go out of the family; one may find comfort in the money, whatever one does in the wife. 587

LEONTINE. But, sir, tho' in obedience to your desire I am ready to marry her, it may be possible she has no inclination to me.

CROAKER. I'll tell you once for all how it stands. A good part of Miss Richland's large fortune consists in a claim upon Government, which my good friend, Mr. Lofty, assures me the Treasury will allow. One half of this she is to forfeit, by her father's will, in case she refuses to marry you. So, if she rejects you, we seize half her fortune; if she accepts you, we seize the whole, and a fine girl into the bargain. 600

LEONTINE. But, sir, if you will but listen to reason—

CROAKER. Come, then, produce your reasons. I tell you, I'm fixed, determined; so now produce your reasons. When I'm determined, I always listen to reason, because it can then do no harm. 607

LEONTINE. You have alleged that a mutual choice was the first requisite in matrimonial happiness.

CROAKER. Well, and you have both of you a mutual choice. She has her choice—to marry you, or lose half her fortune; and you have your choice—to marry her, or pack out of doors without any fortune at all.

LEONTINE. An only son, sir, might expect more indulgence. 617

CROAKER. An only father, sir, might expect more obedience; besides, has not your sister here, that never disobliged me in her life, as good a right as you?—He's a sad dog, 'Livy, my dear, and would take all from you. But he shan't; I tell you he shan't, for you shall have your share. 624

OLIVIA. Dear sir, I wish you'd be convinced that I can never be happy in any addition to my fortune which is taken from his.

CROAKER. Well, well, it's a good child; so say no more, but come with me, and we shall see something that will give us a great deal of pleasure, I promise you—old Rug-

gins, the curry-comb maker, lying in state. I'm told he makes a very handsome corpse and becomes his coffin prodigiously. He was an intimate friend of mine, and these are friendly things we ought to do for each other.

Exeunt

ACT II

SCENE. CROAKER'S *house*

[*Enter*] MISS RICHLAND *and* GARNET

MISS RICHLAND. Olivia not his sister?—Olivia not Leontine's sister? You amaze me!

GARNET. No more his sister than I am; I had it all from his own servant. I can get anything from that quarter.

MISS RICHLAND. But how? Tell me again, Garnet.

GARNET. Why, madam, as I told you before, instead of going to Lyons to bring home his sister, who has been there with her aunt these ten years, he never went further than Paris. There he saw and fell in love with this young lady—by the bye, of a prodigious family.

MISS RICHLAND. And brought her home to my guardian as his daughter?

GARNET. Yes, and daughter she will be. If he don't consent to their marriage, they talk of trying what a Scotch parson can do.

MISS RICHLAND. Well, I own they have deceived me.—And so demurely as Olivia carried it too!—Would you believe it, Garnet, I told her all my secrets; and yet the sly cheat concealed all this from me!

GARNET. And upon my word, madam, I don't much blame her. She was loth to trust one with her secrets, that was so very bad at keeping her own.

MISS RICHLAND. But, to add to their deceit, the young gentleman, it seems, pretends to make me serious proposals. My guardian and he are to be here presently, to open the affair in form. You know I am to lose half my fortune if I refuse him.

GARNET. Yet what can you do? For being, as you are, in love with Mr. Honeywood, madam—

MISS RICHLAND. How! idiot, what do you mean? In love with Mr. Honeywood! Is this to provoke me?

GARNET. That is, madam, in friendship with him. I meant nothing more than friendship, as I hope to be married—nothing more.

MISS RICHLAND. Well, no more of this. As to my guardian and his son, they shall find me prepared to receive them: I'm resolved to accept their proposal with seeming pleasure, to mortify them by compliance, and so throw the refusal at last upon them.

GARNET. Delicious! and that will secure your whole fortune to yourself. Well, who could have thought so innocent a face could cover so much 'cuteness!

MISS RICHLAND. Why, girl, I only oppose my prudence to their cunning, and practise a lesson they have taught me against themselves.

GARNET. Then you're likely not long to want employment, for here they come, and in close conference.

Enter CROAKER *and* LEONTINE

LEONTINE. Excuse me, sir, if I seem to hesitate upon the point of putting the lady so important a question.

CROAKER. [*Apart*] Lord! good sir, moderate your fears; you're so plaguy shy that one would think you had changed sexes. I tell you, we must have the half or the whole. Come, let me see with what spirit you begin. Well, why don't you?—Eh!—what? Well, then—I must, it seems.—Miss Richland, my dear, I believe you guess at our business—an affair which my son here comes to open that nearly concerns your happiness.

MISS RICHLAND. Sir, I should be ungrateful not to be pleased with anything that comes recommended by you.

CROAKER. (*To* LEONTINE) How, boy, could you desire a finer opening? Why don't you begin, I say?

LEONTINE. 'Tis true, madam, my father, madam, has some intentions—hem—of explaining an affair—which—himself—can best explain, madam.

CROAKER. Yes, my dear; it comes entirely from my son; it's all a request of his own, madam. And I will permit him to make the best of it.

LEONTINE. The whole affair is only this, madam; my father has a proposal to make, which he insists none but himself shall deliver.

CROAKER. (*Aside*) My mind misgives me, the fellow will never be brought on.—In short, madam, you see before you one that loves you—one whose whole happiness is all in you.

MISS RICHLAND. I never had any doubts of your regard, sir; and I hope you can have none of my duty.

CROAKER. That's not the thing, my little sweeting; my love! No, no, another-guess lover than I. There he stands, madam; his very looks declare the force of his passion. (*Aside*) Call up a look, you dog!—But then, had you seen him, as I have, weeping, speaking soliloquies and blank verse, sometimes melancholy, and sometimes absent—

MISS RICHLAND. I fear, sir, he's absent now, or such a declaration would have come most properly from himself.

CROAKER. Himself, madam! He would die before he could make such a confession; and if he had not a channel for his passion through me, it would ere now have drowned his understanding.

MISS RICHLAND. I must grant, sir, there are attractions in modest diffidence above the force of words. A silent address is the genuine eloquence of sincerity.

CROAKER. Madam, he has forgot to speak any other language; silence is become his mother tongue.

MISS RICHLAND. And it must be confessed, sir, it speaks very powerfully in his favor. And yet I shall be thought too forward in making such a confession; shan't I, Mr. Leontine.

LEONTINE. (*Aside*) Confusion! my reserve will undo me. But if modesty attracts her, impudence may disgust her. I'll try.—Don't imagine from my silence, madam, that I want a due sense of the honor and happiness intended me. My father, madam, tells me, your humble servant is not totally indifferent to you—he admires you: I adore you; and when we come together, upon my soul I believe we shall be the happiest couple in all St. James's.

MISS RICHLAND. If I could flatter myself you thought as you speak, sir—

LEONTINE. Doubt my sincerity, madam? By your dear self I swear. Ask the brave if they desire glory! ask cowards if they covet safety—

CROAKER. Well, well; no more questions about it.

LEONTINE. Ask the sick if they long for health! ask misers if they love money! ask—

CROAKER. Ask a fool if he can talk nonsense! What's come over the boy? What signifies asking when there's not a soul to give you an answer? If you would ask to the purpose, ask this lady's consent to make you happy.

MISS RICHLAND. Why indeed, sir, his uncommon ardor almost compels me—forces me—to comply. And yet I'm afraid he'll despise a conquest gained with too much ease; won't you, Mr. Leontine?

LEONTINE. (*Aside*) Confusion!—Oh, by no means, madam—by no means. And yet, madam, you talked of force. There is nothing I would avoid so much as compulsion in a thing of this kind. No, madam, I will still be generous, and leave you at liberty to refuse.

CROAKER. But I tell you, sir, the lady is not at liberty. It's a match. You see she says nothing. Silence gives consent.

LEONTINE. But, sir, she talked of force. Consider, sir, the cruelty of constraining her inclinations.

CROAKER. But I say there's no cruelty. Don't you know, blockhead, that girls have always a roundabout way of saying *yes* before company? So get you both gone together into the next room, and hang him that interrupts the tender explanation.—Get you gone, I say; I'll not hear a word.

LEONTINE. But, sir, I must beg leave to insist—

CROAKER. Get off, you puppy, or I'll beg leave to insist upon knocking you down. Stupid whelp! But I don't wonder: the boy takes entirely after his mother.

Exeunt MISS RICHLAND *and* LEONTINE

Enter MRS. CROAKER

MRS. CROAKER. Mr. Croaker, I bring you something, my dear, that I believe will make you smile.

CROAKER. I'll hold you a guinea of that, my dear.

MRS. CROAKER. A letter; and, as I knew the hand, I ventured to open it.

CROAKER. And how can you expect your breaking open my letters should give me pleasure?

MRS. CROAKER. Pooh! it's from your sister at Lyons, and contains good news; read it.

CROAKER. What a Frenchified cover is here! That sister of mine has some good qualities, but I could never teach her to fold a letter.

MRS. CROAKER. Fold a fiddlestick! Read what it contains.

CROAKER. (*Reading*)

Dear Nick,—An English gentleman, of large fortune, has for some time made private, though honorable, proposals to your daughter Olivia. They love each other tenderly, and I find she has consented, without letting any of the family know, to crown his addresses. As such good offers don't come every day, your own good sense, his large fortune, and family considerations, will induce you to forgive her.

Yours ever,
Rachel Croaker

My daughter Olivia privately contracted to a man of large fortune! This is good news, indeed. Oh, my heart never foretold me of this.—And yet, how slyly the little baggage has carried it since she came home; not a word on't to the old ones for the world. Yet I thought I saw something she wanted to conceal.

MRS. CROAKER. Well, if they have concealed their amour, they shan't conceal their wedding; that shall be public, I'm resolved.

CROAKER. I tell thee, woman, the wedding is the most foolish part of the ceremony. I can never get this woman to think of the most serious part of the nuptial engagement.

MRS. CROAKER. What would you have me think of, their funeral?—But come, tell me, my dear, don't you owe more to me than you care to confess? Would you have ever been known to Mr. Lofty, who has undertaken Miss Richland's claim at the Treasury, but for me? Who was it first made him an acquaintance at Lady Shabbaroon's rout? Who got him to promise us his interest? Is not he a backstairs favorite, one that can do what he pleases with those that do what they please? Is not he an acquaintance that all your groaning and lamentation could never have got us?

CROAKER. He is a man of importance, I grant you. And yet what amazes me is, that while he is giving away places to all the world he can't get one for himself.

MRS. CROAKER. That perhaps may be owing to his nicety. Great men are not easily satisfied.

Enter French Servant

SERVANT. An expresse from Monsieur Lofty. He vil be vait upon your honors instammant. He be only giving four five instruction, read two three memorial, call upon von ambassadeur. He vil be vid you in one tree minutes.

MRS. CROAKER. You see now, my dear. What an extensive department!—Well, friend, let your master know that we are extremely honored by this honor.—Was there anything ever in a higher style of breeding? All messages among the great are now done by express.

CROAKER. To be sure, no man does little things with more solemnity, or claims more respect than he. But he's in the right on't. In our bad world respect is given where respect is claimed.

MRS. CROAKER. Never mind the world, my dear; you were never in a pleasanter place in your life. Let us now think of receiving him with proper respect—(*A loud*

rapping at the door)—and there he is, by the thundering rap.

CROAKER. Aye, verily, there he is! as close upon the heels of his own express as an endorsement upon the back of a bill. Well, I'll leave you to receive him whilst I go to chide my little Olivia for intending to steal a marriage without mine or her aunt's consent. I must seem to be angry, or she too may begin to despise my authority. *Exit*

Enter LOFTY, *speaking to his* Servant

LOFTY. And if the Venetian ambassador, or that teasing creature the Marquis, should call, I'm not at home. Dam'me, I'll be pack-horse to none of them. [*To* MRS. CROAKER] My dear madam, I have just snatched a moment—And if the expresses to his grace be ready, let them be sent off; they're of importance.—[*Again*] Madam, I ask a thousand pardons!

MRS. CROAKER. Sir, this honor—

LOFTY. And, Dubardieu! if the person calls about the commission, let him know that it is made out. As for Lord Cumbercourt's stale request, it can keep cold: you understand me.—Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons.

MRS. CROAKER. Sir, this honor—

LOFTY. [*Calling*] And Dubardieu! if the man comes from the Cornish borough, you must do him; you must do him, I say.—Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons.—And if the Russian Ambassador calls—but he will scarce call to-day, I believe.—And now, madam, I have just got time to express my happiness in having the honor of being permitted to profess myself your most obedient, humble servant.

MRS. CROAKER. Sir, the happiness and honor are all mine; and yet I'm only robbing the public while I detain you.

LOFTY. Sink the public, madam, when the fair are to be attended. Ah, could all my hours be so charmingly devoted! Sincerely, don't you pity us poor creatures in affairs? Thus it is eternally; solicited for places here, teased for pensions there, and courted everywhere. I know you pity me.—Yes, I see you do.

MRS. CROAKER. Excuse me, sir. "Toils of empires pleasures are," as Waller Congrave says.[1]

LOFTY. Waller, Waller—is he of the House?

MRS. CROAKER. The modern poet of that name, sir.

LOFTY. Oh, a modern! We men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters, but not for us. Why now, here I stand that know nothing of books. I say, madam, I know nothing of books; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp act, or a jag-hire,[2] I can talk my two hours without feeling the want of them.

MRS. CROAKER. The world is no stranger to Mr. Lofty's eminence in every capacity.

LOFTY. I vow to gad, madam, you make me blush. I'm nothing, nothing, nothing in the world—a mere obscure gentleman. To be sure, indeed, one or two of the present ministers are pleased to represent me as a formal man. I know they are pleased to bespatter me at all their little dirty levees. Yet upon my soul, I wonder what they see in me to treat me so! Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow, by all that's honorable, my resentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm—that is, as mere men.

MRS. CROAKER. What importance, and yet what modesty!

LOFTY. Oh, if you talk of modesty, madam, there, I own, I'm accessible to praise. Modesty is my foible. It was so the Duke of Brentford used to say of me: "I love Jack Lofty," he used to say; "no man has a finer knowledge of things; quite a man of information; and when he speaks upon his legs, by the Lord, he's prodigious—he scouts them. And yet all men have their faults; too much modesty is his," says his Grace.

MRS. CROAKER. And yet, I dare say, you

[1] So in Q1. [2] An Indian tax grant.

don't want assurance when you come to solicit for your friends.

LOFTY. Oh, there indeed I'm in bronze. Apropos! I have just been mentioning Miss Richland's case to a certain personage; we must name no names. When I ask, I am not to be put off, madam. No, no, I take my friend by the button. "A fine girl, sir; great justice in her case. A friend of mine —borough interest—business must be done, Mr. Secretary.—I say, Mr. Secretary, her business must be done, sir." That's my way, madam.

MRS. CROAKER. Bless me! you said all this to the Secretary of State, did you?

LOFTY. I did not say the Secretary, did I? Well, curse it, since you have found me out, I will not deny it. It was to the Secretary.

MRS. CROAKER. This was going to the fountain-head at once, not applying to the understrappers, as Mr. Honeywood would have had us.

LOFTY. Honeywood!—he! he! He was, indeed, a fine solicitor. I suppose you have heard what has just happened to him?

MRS. CROAKER. Poor dear man! no accident, I hope?

LOFTY. Undone, madam, that's all. His creditors have taken him into custody. A prisoner in his own house.

MRS. CROAKER. A prisoner in his own house? How! At this very time? I'm quite unhappy for him.

LOFTY. Why, so am I. The man, to be sure, was immensely good-natured. But then, I could never find that he had anything in him.

MRS. CROAKER. His manner, to be sure, was excessive harmless; some, indeed, thought it a little dull. For my part, I always concealed my opinion.

LOFTY. It can't be concealed, madam; the man was dull—dull as the last new comedy! a poor impracticable creature! I tried once or twice to know if he was fit for business, but he had scarce talents to be groom-porter to an orange-barrow.

MRS. CROAKER. How differently does Miss Richland think of him! for, I believe, with all his faults, she loves him.

LOFTY. Loves him! Does she? You should cure her of that, by all means. Let me see; what if she were sent to him this instant, in his present doleful situation? My life for it, that works her cure. Distress is a perfect antidote to love. Suppose we join her in the next room! Miss Richland is a fine girl, has a fine fortune, and must not be thrown away. Upon my honor, madam, I have a regard for Miss Richland, and rather than she should be thrown away, I should think it no indignity to marry her myself. *Exeunt*

Enter OLIVIA *and* LEONTINE

LEONTINE. And yet, trust me, Olivia, I had every reason to expect Miss Richland's refusal, as I did everything in my power to deserve it. Her indelicacy surprises me.

OLIVIA. Sure, Leontine, there's nothing so indelicate in being sensible of your merit. If so, I fear I shall be the most guilty thing alive.

LEONTINE. But you mistake, my dear. The same attention I used to advance my merit with you, I practised to lessen it with her. What more could I do?

OLIVIA. Let us now rather consider what is to be done. We have both dissembled too long.—I have always been ashamed—I am now quite weary of it. Sure, I could never have undergone so much for any other but you.

LEONTINE. And you shall find my gratitude equal to your kindest compliance. Tho' our friends should totally forsake us, Olivia, we can draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune.

OLIVIA. Then why should we defer our scheme of humble happiness when it is now in our power? I may be the favorite of your father, it is true; but can it ever be thought that his present kindness to a supposed child will continue to a known deceiver?

LEONTINE. I have many reasons to believe it will. As his attachments are but few, they are lasting. His own marriage was a private one, as ours may be. Besides, I have sounded

him already at a distance, and find all his answers exactly to our wish. Nay, by an expression or two that dropped from him, I am induced to think he knows of this affair.

OLIVIA. Indeed! But that would be a happiness too great to be expected.

LEONTINE. However it be, I'm certain you have power over him; and am persuaded, if you informed him of our situation, that he would be disposed to pardon it.

OLIVIA. You had equal expectations, Leontine, from your last scheme with Miss Richland, which you find has succeeded most wretchedly.

LEONTINE. And that's the best reason for trying another.

OLIVIA. If it must be so, I submit.

LEONTINE. As we could wish, he comes this way. Now, my dearest Olivia, be resolute. I'll just retire within hearing, to come in at a proper time, either to share your danger or confirm your victory. *Exit*

Enter CROAKER

CROAKER. [*Aside*] Yes, I must forgive her; and yet not too easily, neither. It will be proper to keep up the decorums of resentment a little, if it be only to impress her with an idea of my authority.

OLIVIA. [*Aside*] How I tremble to approach him!—[*Aloud*] Might I presume, sir, —if I interrupt you—

CROAKER. No, child, where I have an affection it is not a little thing that can interrupt me. Affection gets over little things.

OLIVIA. Sir, you're too kind. I'm sensible how ill I deserve this partiality. Yet Heaven knows, there is nothing I would not do to gain it.

CROAKER. And you have but too well succeeded, you little hussy, you! With those endearing ways of yours, on my conscience, I could be brought to forgive anything, unless it were a very great offence indeed.

OLIVIA. But mine is such an offence.—When you know my guilt—yes, you shall know it, tho' I feel the greatest pain in the confession.

CROAKER. Why, then, if it be so very great a pain, you may spare yourself the trouble; for I know every syllable of the matter before you begin.

OLIVIA. Indeed! then I'm undone.

CROAKER. Aye, miss, you wanted to steal a match without letting me know it, did you? But I'm not worth being consulted, I suppose, when there's to be a marriage in my own family. No, I'm to have no hand in the disposal of my own children. No, I'm nobody. I'm to be a mere article of family lumber—a piece of cracked china to be stuck up in a corner.

OLIVIA. Dear sir, nothing but the dread of your authority could induce us to conceal it from you.

CROAKER. No, no, my consequence is no more; I'm as little minded as a dead Russian in winter, just stuck up with a pipe in its mouth till there comes a thaw.—(*Aside*) It goes to my heart to vex her.

OLIVIA. I was prepared, sir, for your anger, and despaired of pardon even while I presumed to ask it. But your severity shall never abate my affection, as my punishment is but justice.

CROAKER. And yet you should not despair neither, 'Livy. We ought to hope all for the best.

OLIVIA. And do you permit me to hope, sir? Can I ever expect to be forgiven?—But hope has too long deceived me.

CROAKER. Why then, child, it shan't deceive you now, for I forgive you this very moment; I forgive you all—and now you are indeed my daughter.

OLIVIA. Oh, transport! this kindness overpowers me.

CROAKER. I was always against severity to our children. We have been young and giddy ourselves, and we can't expect boys and girls to be old before their time.

OLIVIA. What generosity!—But can you forget the many falsehoods, the dissimulation—

CROAKER. You did indeed dissemble, you urchin, you; but where's the girl that won't dissemble for a husband? My wife and I

had never been married if we had not dissembled a little beforehand.

OLIVIA. It shall be my future care never to put such generosity to a second trial. And as for the partner of my offence and folly, from his native honor and the just sense he has of his duty, I can answer for him that—

Enter LEONTINE

LEONTINE. (*Kneeling*) Permit him thus to answer for himself. Thus, sir, let me speak my gratitude for this unmerited forgiveness. Yes, sir, this even exceeds all your former tenderness. I now can boast the most indulgent of fathers. The life he gave, compared to this, was but a trifling blessing.

CROAKER. And, good sir, who sent for you, with that fine tragedy face and flourishing manner? I don't know what we have to do with your gratitude upon this occasion.

LEONTINE. How, sir! Is it possible to be silent when so much obliged? Would you refuse me the pleasure of being grateful—of adding my thanks to my Olivia's—of sharing in the transports that you have thus occasioned?

CROAKER. Lord, sir, we can be happy enough without your coming in to make up the party! I don't know what's the matter with the boy all this day; he has got into such a rhodomontade manner all the morning!

LEONTINE. But, sir, I that have so large a part in the benefit, is it not my duty to show my joy? is the being admitted to your favor so slight an obligation? is the happiness of marrying my Olivia so small a blessing?

CROAKER. Marrying Olivia! marrying Olivia!—marrying his own sister? Sure the boy is out of his senses! His own sister!

LEONTINE. My sister?

OLIVIA. (*Aside*) Sister! How have I been mistaken!

LEONTINE. (*Aside*) Some cursed mistake in all this, I find!

CROAKER. What does the booby mean—or has he any meaning?—Eh, what do you mean, you blockhead, you?

LEONTINE. Mean, sir—why, sir—only, when my sister is to be married, that I have the pleasure of marrying her, sir; that is, of giving her away, sir—I have made a point of it.

CROAKER. Oh, is that all!—Give her away?—You have made a point of it? Then you had as good make a point of first giving away yourself, as I'm going to prepare the writings between you and Miss Richland this very minute.—[OLIVIA *weeps*] What a fuss is here about nothing! Why, what's the matter now? I thought I had made you at least as happy as you could wish.

OLIVIA. Oh yes, sir; very happy.

CROAKER. Do you foresee anything, child? You look as if you did. I think if anything was to be foreseen, I have as sharp a lookout as another; and yet I foresee nothing.

Exit

OLIVIA. What can it mean?

LEONTINE. He knows something, and yet for my life I can't tell what.

OLIVIA. It can't be the connection between us, I'm pretty certain.

LEONTINE. Whatever it be, my dearest, I am resolved to put it out of fortune's power to repeat our mortification. I'll haste and prepare for our journey to Scotland this very evening. My friend Honeywood has promised me his advice and assistance. I'll go to him, and repose our distresses on his friendly bosom; and I know so much of his honest heart that, if he can't relieve our uneasiness, he will at least share them.

Exeunt

ACT III

SCENE. *Young* HONEYWOOD'S *house*

Bailiff, HONEYWOOD, [*and a*] Follower [*of the* Bailiff]

BAILIFF. Look ye, sir, I have arrested as good men as you in my time, no disparagement of you neither—men that would go forty guineas on a game of cribbage. I challenge the town to show a man in more genteeler practice than myself.

HONEYWOOD. Without all question, Mr. —I forget your name, sir.

BAILIFF. How can you forget what you never knew? he! he! he!

HONEYWOOD. May I beg leave to ask your name?

BAILIFF. Yes, you may.

HONEYWOOD. Then pray, sir, what is your name, sir?

BAILIFF. That I didn't promise to tell you. He! he! he! A joke breaks no bones, as we say among us that practise the law.

HONEYWOOD. You may have reason for keeping it a secret, perhaps?

BAILIFF. The law does nothing without reason. I'm ashamed to tell my name to no man, sir. If you can show cause, as why, upon a special capus, that I should prove my name—But come, Timothy Twitch is my name. And, now you know my name, what have you to say to that?

HONEYWOOD. Nothing in the world, good Mr. Twitch, but that I have a favor to ask; that's all.

BAILIFF. Aye, favors are more easily asked than granted, as we say among us that practise the law. I have taken an oath against granting favors. Would you have me perjure myself?

HONEYWOOD. But my request will come recommended in so strong a manner as, I believe, you'll have no scruple. (*Pulling out his purse*) The thing is only this. I believe I shall be able to discharge this trifle in two or three days at farthest; but as I would not have the affair known for the world, I have thoughts of keeping you and your good friend here about me till the debt is discharged—for which I shall be properly grateful.

BAILIFF. Oh! that's another maxum, and altogether within my oath. For certain, if an honest man is to get anything by a thing, there's no reason why all things should not be done in civility.

HONEYWOOD. Doubtless, all trades must live, Mr. Twitch; and yours is a necessary one. (*Gives him money*)

BAILIFF. Oh! your honor; I hope your honor takes nothing amiss as I does, as I does nothing but my duty in so doing. I'm sure no man can say I ever give a gentleman, that was a gentleman, ill usage. If I saw that a gentleman was a gentleman, I have taken money not to see him for ten weeks together.

HONEYWOOD. Tenderness is a virtue, Mr. Twitch.

BAILIFF. Aye, sir, it's a perfect treasure. I love to see a gentleman with a tender heart. I don't know, but I think I have a tender heart myself. If all that I have lost by my heart was put together, it would make a—but no matter for that.

HONEYWOOD. Don't account it lost, Mr. Twitch. The ingratitude of the world can never deprive us of the conscious happiness of having acted with humanity ourselves.

BAILIFF. Humanity, sir, is a jewel. It's better than gold. I love humanity. People may say that we in our way have no humanity, but I'll show you my humanity this moment. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children; a guinea or two would be more to him than twice as much to another. Now, as I can't show him any humanity myself, I must beg leave you'll do it for me.

HONEYWOOD. I assure you, Mr. Twitch, yours is a most powerful recommendation. (*Giving money to the* Follower)

BAILIFF. Sir, you're a gentleman. I see you know what to do with your money.—But to business: we are to be with you here as your friends, I suppose. But set in case[1] company comes.—Little Flanigan here, to be sure, has a good face—a very good face; but then, he is a little seedy, as we say among us that practise the law.—Not well in clothes. Smoke the pocket-holes!

HONEYWOOD. Well, that shall be remedied without delay.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir, Miss Richland is below.

HONEYWOOD. How unlucky! Detain her a moment. We must improve, my good friend, little Mr. Flanigan's appearance first. Here, let Mr. Flanigan have a suit of my

1 suppose that.

clothes—quick—the brown and silver.—Do you hear?

SERVANT. That your honor gave away to the begging gentleman that makes verses, because it was as good as new.

HONEYWOOD. The white and gold then!

SERVANT. That, your honor, I made bold to sell, because it was good for nothing.

HONEYWOOD. Well, the first that comes to hand then—the blue and gold then. I believe Mr. Flanigan will look best in blue.

Exit FLANIGAN [*and* Servant]

BAILIFF. Rabbit me, but little Flanigan will look well in anything. Ah, if your honor knew that bit of flesh as well as I do, you'd be perfectly in love with him! There's not a prettier scout in the four counties after a shy-cock than he; scents like a hound, sticks like a weasel. He was master of the ceremonies to the black Queen of Morocco when I took him to follow me.

Re-enter FLANIGAN

Heh, ecod, I think he looks so well that I don't care if I have a suit from the same place myself.

HONEYWOOD. Well, well, I hear the lady coming.—Dear Mr. Twitch, I beg you'll give your friend directions not to speak. As for yourself, I know you will say nothing without being directed.

BAILIFF. Never you fear me; I'll show the lady that I have something to say for myself as well as another. One man has one way of talking, and another man has another; that's all the difference between them.

Enter MISS RICHLAND, *her* Maid, [*and* Servant]

MISS RICHLAND. You'll be surprised, sir, with this visit. But you know I'm yet to thank you for choosing my little library.

HONEYWOOD. Thanks, madam, are unnecessary, as it was I that was obliged by your commands.—[*To* Servant] Chairs here!—Two of my very good friends, Mr. Twitch and Mr. Flanigan. Pray, gentlemen, sit without ceremony.

[*All are seated. Exit* Servant]

MISS RICHLAND. (*Aside*) Who can these odd-looking men be! I fear it is as I was informed; it must be so.

BAILIFF. (*After a pause*) Pretty weather; very pretty weather for the time of year, madam.

FOLLOWER. Very good circuit weather in the country.

HONEYWOOD. You officers are generally favorites among the ladies. My friends, madam, have been upon very disagreeable duty, I assure you. The fair should, in some measure, recompense the toils of the brave.

MISS RICHLAND. Our officers do indeed deserve every favor. The gentlemen are in the marine service, I presume, sir?

HONEYWOOD. Why, madam, they do—occasionally serve in the Fleet, madam. A dangerous service!

MISS RICHLAND. I'm told so. And I own it has often surprised me that while we have had so many instances of bravery there, we have had so few of wit at home to praise it.

HONEYWOOD. I grant, madam, that our poets have not written as our soldiers have fought: but they have done all they could, and Hawke or Amherst could do no more.

MISS RICHLAND. I'm quite displeased when I see a fine subject spoiled by a dull writer.

HONEYWOOD. We should not be so severe against dull writers, madam. It is ten to one but the dullest writer exceeds the most rigid French critic who presumes to despise him.

FOLLOWER. Damn the French, the parle vous, and all that belongs to them!

MISS RICHLAND. Sir!

HONEYWOOD. Ha, ha, ha!—honest Mr. Flanigan! A true English officer, madam; he's not contented with beating the French, but he will scold them too.

MISS RICHLAND. Yet, Mr. Honeywood, this does not convince me but that[1] severity in criticism is necessary. It was our first adopting the severity of French taste that has brought them in turn to taste us.

BAILIFF. Taste us! By the Lord, madam, they devour us. Give monseers but a taste,

[1] Still a common error.

and I'll be damned but they come in for a bellyful.

MISS RICHLAND. Very extraordinary this!

FOLLOWER. But very true. What makes the bread rising? the parle vous that devour us. What makes the mutton five pence a pound? the parle vous that eat it up. What makes the beer threepence-halfpence a pot?—

HONEYWOOD. (*Aside*) Ah! the vulgar rogues; all will be out.—[*Aloud*] Right, gentlemen, very right, upon my word, and quite to the purpose. They draw a parallel, madam, between the mental taste and that of our senses. We are injured as much by the French severity in the one as by French rapacity in the other. That's their meaning.

MISS RICHLAND. Tho' I don't see the force of the parallel, yet I'll own that we should sometimes pardon books, as we do our friends, that have now and then agreeable absurdities to recommend them.

BAILIFF. That's all my eye. The king only can pardon, as the law says; for, set in case—

HONEYWOOD. I'm quite of your opinion, sir. I see the whole drift of your argument. Yes, certainly; our presuming to pardon any work is arrogating a power that belongs to another. If all have power to condemn, what writer can be free?

BAILIFF. By his habus corpus. His habus corpus can set him free at any time: for, set in case—

HONEYWOOD. I'm obliged to you, sir, for the hint. If, madam, as my friend observes, our laws are so careful of a gentleman's person, sure we ought to be equally careful of his dearer part—his fame.

FOLLOWER. Aye, but if so be a man's nabbed, you know—

HONEYWOOD. Mr. Flanigan, if you spoke forever, you could not improve the last observation. For my own part, I think it conclusive.

BAILIFF. As for the matter of that, mayhap—

HONEYWOOD. Nay, sir, give me leave in this instance to be positive. For where is the necessity of censuring works without genius, which must shortly sink of themselves? what is it but aiming an unnecessary blow against a victim already under the hands of justice?

BAILIFF. Justice! Oh, by the eleven,[1] if you talk about justice, I think I am at home there; for, in a course of law—

HONEYWOOD. My dear Mr. Twitch, I discern what you'd be at, perfectly; and I believe the lady must be sensible of the art with which it is introduced. I suppose you perceive the meaning, madam, of his course of law.

MISS RICHLAND. I protest, sir, I do not. I perceive only that you answer one gentleman before he has finished and the other before he has well begun.

BAILIFF. Madam, you are a gentlewoman, and I will make the matter out. This here question is about severity, and justice, and pardon, and the like of they. Now, to explain the thing—

HONEYWOOD. (*Aside*) Oh! curse your explanations.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Mr. Leontine, sir, below, desires to speak with you upon earnest business.

HONEYWOOD. (*Aside*) That's lucky.—Dear madam, you'll excuse me and my good friends here, for a few minutes. There are books, madam, to amuse you. Come, gentlemen, you know I make no ceremony with such friends. After you, sir. Excuse me.—Well, if I must. But I know your natural politeness.

BAILIFF. Before and behind, you know.

FOLLOWER. Aye, aye, before and behind, before and behind.

Exeunt HONEYWOOD, Bailiff, *and* Follower

MISS RICHLAND. What can all this mean, Garnet?

GARNET. Mean, madam! why, what should it mean, but what Mr. Lofty sent you here to see? These people he calls officers are officers sure enough—sheriff's officers—bailiffs, madam.

[1] O. E. D., origin unknown.

MISS RICHLAND. Aye, it is certainly so. Well, though his perplexities are far from giving me pleasure, yet I own there is something very ridiculous in them and a just punishment for his dissimulation.

GARNET. And so they are. But I wonder, madam, that the lawyer you just employed to pay his debts and set him free, has not done it by this time. He ought at least to have been here before now; but lawyers are always more ready to get a man into troubles than out of them.

Enter SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD

SIR WILLIAM. For Miss Richland to undertake setting him free, I own, was quite unexpected. It has totally unhinged my schemes to reclaim him. Yet it gives me pleasure to find that, among a number of worthless friendships, he has made one acquisition of real value; for there must be some softer passion on her side that prompts this generosity.—Ha! here before me! I'll endeavor to sound her affections.—Madam, as I am the person that has[1] had some demands upon the gentleman of this house, I hope you'll excuse me if, before I enlarged him, I wanted to see yourself.

MISS RICHLAND. The precaution was very unnecessary, sir. I suppose your wants were only such as my agent had power to satisfy.

SIR WILLIAM. Partly, madam. But I was also willing you should be fully apprised of the character of the gentleman you intended to serve.

MISS RICHLAND. It must come, sir, with a very ill grace from you. To censure it after what you have done, would look like malice; and to speak favorably of a character you have oppressed, would be impeaching your own. And sure, his tenderness, his humanity, his universal friendship, may atone for many faults.

SIR WILLIAM. That friendship, madam, which is exerted in too wide a sphere, becomes totally useless. Our bounty, like a drop of water, disappears when diffused too widely. They who pretend most to this universal benevolence are either deceivers or dupes—men who desire to cover their private ill-nature by a pretended regard for all, or men who, reasoning themselves into false feelings, are more earnest in pursuit of splendid, than of useful, virtues.

MISS RICHLAND. I am surprised, sir, to hear one who has probably been a gainer by the folly of others, so severe in his censure of it.

SIR WILLIAM. Whatever I may have gained by folly, madam, you see I am willing to prevent your losing by it.

MISS RICHLAND. Your cares for me, sir, are unnecessary. I always suspect those services which are denied where they are wanted, and offered, perhaps, in hopes of a refusal. No, sir, my directions have been given, and I insist upon their being complied with.

SIR WILLIAM. Thou amiable woman! I can no longer contain the expressions of my gratitude, my pleasure. You see before you one who has been equally careful of his interest, one who has for some time been a concealed spectator of his follies and only punished in hopes to reclaim him—his uncle!

MISS RICHLAND. Sir William Honeywood! You amaze me. How shall I conceal my confusion? I fear, sir, you'll think I have been too forward in my services. I confess I—

SIR WILLIAM. Don't make any apologies, madam. I only find myself unable to repay the obligation. And yet, I have been trying my interest of late to serve you. Having learnt, madam, that you had some demands upon Government, I have, though unasked, been your solicitor there.

MISS RICHLAND. Sir, I'm infinitely obliged to your intentions. But my guardian has employed another gentleman, who assures him of success.

SIR WILLIAM. Who? The important little man that visits here? Trust me, madam, he's quite contemptible among men in power, and utterly unable to serve you. Mr. Lofty's promises are much better known to people of fashion than his person, I assure you.

MISS RICHLAND. How have we been deceived! As sure as can be, here he comes.

[1] Q1 *have*.

SIR WILLIAM. Does he? Remember I'm to continue unknown. My return to England has not yet been made public. With what impudence he enters!

Enter LOFTY

LOFTY. [*Calls back*] Let the chariot—let my chariot drive off; I'll visit to his Grace's in a chair. Miss Richland here before me! Punctual, as usual, to the calls of humanity. —I'm very sorry, madam, things of this kind should happen, especially to a man I have shown everywhere and carried amongst us as a particular acquaintance.

MISS RICHLAND. I find, sir, you have the art of making the misfortunes of others your own.

LOFTY. My dear madam, what can a private man like me do? One man can't do everything; and then, I do so much in this way every day. Let me see; something considerable might be done for him by subscription. It could not fail if I carried the list. I'll undertake to set down a brace of dukes, two dozen lords, and half the lower House, at my own peril.

SIR WILLIAM. And, after all, it's more than probable, sir, he might reject the offer of such powerful patronage.

LOFTY. Then, madam, what can we do? You know I never make promises. In truth, I once or twice tried to do something with him in the way of business; but, as I often told his uncle, Sir William Honeywood, the man was utterly impracticable.

SIR WILLIAM. His uncle! Then that gentleman, I suppose, is a particular friend of yours?

LOFTY. Meaning me, sir?—Yes, madam, as I often said, "My dear Sir William, you are sensible I would do anything, as far as my poor interest goes, to serve your family." But what can be done? there's no procuring first-rate places for ninth-rate abilities.

MISS RICHLAND. I have heard of Sir William Honeywood; he's abroad in employment. He confided in your judgment, I suppose?

LOFTY. Why, yes, madam, I believe Sir William had some reason to confide in my judgment—one little reason, perhaps.

MISS RICHLAND. Pray, sir, what was it?

LOFTY. Why, madam—but let it go no further—it was I procured him his place.

SIR WILLIAM. Did you, sir?

LOFTY. Either you or I, sir.

MISS RICHLAND. This, Mr. Lofty, was very kind indeed.

LOFTY. I did love him, to be sure. He had some amusing qualities; no man was fitter to be a toast-master to a club, or had a better head.

MISS RICHLAND. A better head?

LOFTY. Aye, at a bottle. To be sure, he was as dull as a choice spirit; but hang it, he was grateful—very grateful—and gratitude hides a multitude of faults.

SIR WILLIAM. He might have reason, perhaps. His place is pretty considerable, I'm told.

LOFTY. A trifle, a mere trifle among us men of business. The truth is, he wanted dignity to fill up a greater.

SIR WILLIAM. Dignity of person, do you mean, sir? I'm told he's much about my size and figure, sir.

LOFTY. Aye, tall enough for a marching regiment; but then he wanted a something—a consequence of form—a kind of a—I believe the lady perceives my meaning—

MISS RICHLAND. Oh, perfectly; you courtiers can do anything, I see.

LOFTY. My dear madam, all this is but a mere exchange; we do greater things for one another every day. Why, as thus, now: let me suppose you the First Lord of the Treasury; you have an employment in you that I want; I have a place in me that you want. Do me here, do you there—interest of both sides—few words—flat—done and done, and it's over.

SIR WILLIAM. (*Aside*) A thought strikes me.—Now you mention Sir William Honeywood, madam, and as he seems, sir, an acquaintance of yours, you'll be glad to hear he's arrived from Italy. I had it from a friend who knows him as well as he does me, and you may depend on my information.

LOFTY. (*Aside*) The devil he is! If I had known that, we should not have been quite so well acquainted. 477

SIR WILLIAM. He is certainly returned; and, as this gentleman is a friend of yours, he can be of signal service to us by introducing me to him. There are some papers relative to your affairs that require dispatch and his inspection. 483

MISS RICHLAND. This gentleman, Mr. Lofty, is a person employed in my affairs; I know you'll serve us.

LOFTY. My dear madam, I live but to serve you. Sir William shall even wait upon him if you think proper to command it.

SIR WILLIAM. That will be quite unnecessary. 491

LOFTY. Well, we must introduce you, then. Call upon me—let me see—aye, in two days.

SIR WILLIAM. Now, or the opportunity will be lost forever. 496

LOFTY. Well, if it must be now, now let it be. But damn it, that's unfortunate; my Lord Grig's cursed Pensacola business comes on this very hour, and I'm engaged to attend. —Another time— 501

SIR WILLIAM. A short letter to Sir William will do.

LOFTY. You shall have it.—Yet, in my opinion, a letter is a very bad way of going to work; face to face, that's my way. 506

SIR WILLIAM. The letter, sir, will do quite as well.

LOFTY. Zounds! Sir, do you pretend to direct me in the business of office? Do you know me, sir?—Who am I? 511

MISS RICHLAND. Dear Mr. Lofty, this request is not so much his as mine; if my commands—but you despise my power.

LOFTY. Delicate creature! your commands could even control a debate at midnight; to a power so constitutional, I am all obedience and tranquillity. He shall have a letter. Where is my secretary?—Dubardieu!—And yet, I protest I don't like this way of doing business. I think if I spoke first to Sir William—but you will have it so. 522

Exit [LOFTY] *with* MISS RICHLAND

SIR WILLIAM. (*Alone*) Ha! ha! ha!—This, too, is one of my nephew's hopeful associates. O Vanity, thou constant deceiver, how do all thy efforts to exalt, serve but to sink us! Thy false colorings, like those employed to heighten beauty, only seem to mend that bloom which they contribute to destroy. I'm not displeased at this interview. Exposing this fellow's impudence to the contempt it deserves, may be of use to my design; at least, if he can reflect, it will be of use to himself. 534

Enter JARVIS

SIR WILLIAM. How now, Jarvis, where's your master, my nephew?

JARVIS. At his wit's ends, I believe; he's scarce gotten out of one scrape but he's running his head into another.

SIR WILLIAM. How so? 540

JARVIS. The house has but just been cleared of the bailiffs, and now he's again engaging, tooth and nail, in assisting old Croaker's son to patch up a clandestine match with the young lady that passes in the house for his sister. 546

SIR WILLIAM. Ever busy to serve others.

JARVIS. Aye, anybody but himself. The young couple, it seems, are just setting out for Scotland, and he supplies them with money for the journey. 551

SIR WILLIAM. Money! How is he able to supply others, who has scarce any for himself?

JARVIS. Why, there it is. He has no money, that's true; but then, as he never said *no* to any request in his life, he has given them a bill, drawn by a friend of his upon a merchant in the city, which I am to get changed; for you must know that I am to go with them to Scotland myself. 561

SIR WILLIAM. How!

JARVIS. It seems the young gentleman is obliged to take a different road from his mistress, as he is to call upon an uncle of his that lives out of the way, in order to prepare a place for their reception when they return; so they have borrowed me from my master,

as the properest person to attend the young lady down.

SIR WILLIAM. To the land of matrimony!—A pleasant journey, Jarvis.

JARVIS. Aye, but I'm only to have all the fatigues on't.

SIR WILLIAM. Well, it may be shorter, less fatiguing, than you imagine. I know but too much of the young lady's family and connections, whom I have seen abroad. I have also discovered that Miss Richland is not indifferent to my thoughtless nephew, and will endeavor, though I fear in vain, to establish that connection.—But come, the letter I wait for must be almost finished; I'll let you further into my intention, in the next room. *Exeunt*

ACT IV

SCENE. CROAKER'S *house*

[*Enter*] LOFTY

LOFTY. Well, sure the devil's in me of late, for running my head into such defiles as nothing but a genius like my own could draw me from. I was formerly contented to husband out my places and pensions with some degree of frugality; but, curse it, of late I have given away the whole Court Register in less time than they could print the title-page! Yet hang it, why scruple a lie or two to come at a fine girl, when I every day tell a thousand for nothing?—Ha! Honeywood here before me! Could Miss Richland have set him at liberty?

Enter HONEYWOOD

—Mr. Honeywood, I'm glad to see you abroad again. I find my concurrence was not necessary in your unfortunate affairs. I had put things in a train to do your business, but it is not for me to say what I intended doing.

HONEYWOOD. It was unfortunate indeed, sir. But what adds to my uneasiness is, that while you seem to be acquainted with my misfortune, I myself continue still a stranger to my benefactor.

LOFTY. How! not know the friend that served you?

HONEYWOOD. Can't guess at the person.

LOFTY. Inquire.

HONEYWOOD. I have; but all I can learn is, that he chooses to remain concealed, and that all inquiry must be fruitless.

LOFTY. Must be fruitless!

HONEYWOOD. Absolutely fruitless.

LOFTY. Sure of that?

HONEYWOOD. Very sure.

LOFTY. Then I'll be damned if you shall ever know it from me.

HONEYWOOD. How, sir!

LOFTY. I suppose now, Mr. Honeywood, you think my rent-roll very considerable, and that I have vast sums of money to throw away; I know you do. The world, to be sure, says such things of me.

HONEYWOOD. The world, by what I learn, is no stranger to your generosity. But where does this tend?

LOFTY. To nothing—nothing in the world. The town, to be sure, when it makes such a thing as me the subject of conversation, has asserted that I never yet patronised a man of merit.

HONEYWOOD. I have heard instances to the contrary, even from yourself.

LOFTY. Yes, Honeywood, and there are instances to the contrary that you shall never hear from myself.

HONEYWOOD. Ha! dear sir, permit me to ask you but one question.

LOFTY. Sir, ask me no questions! I say, sir, ask me no questions; I'll be damned if I answer them.

HONEYWOOD. I will ask no further. My friend! my benefactor! it is, it must be here that I am indebted for freedom, for honor. Yes, thou worthiest of men, from the beginning I suspected it, but was afraid to return thanks; which, if undeserved, might seem reproaches.

LOFTY. I protest I do not understand all this, Mr. Honeywood. You treat me very cavalierly. I do assure you, sir—Blood! sir,

can't a man be permitted to enjoy the luxury of his own feelings, without all this parade?

HONEYWOOD. Nay, do not attempt to conceal an action that adds to your honor. Your looks, your air, your manner, all confess it.

LOFTY. Confess it, sir! Torture itself, sir, shall never bring me to confess it. Mr. Honeywood, I have admitted you upon terms of friendship. Don't let us fall out; make me happy, and let this be buried in oblivion. You know I hate ostentation—you know I do. Come, come, Honeywood, you know I always loved to be a friend, and not a patron. I beg this may make no kind of distance between us. Come, come, you and I must be more familiar—indeed we must!

HONEYWOOD. Heavens! Can I ever repay such friendship? Is there any way?—Thou best of men, can I ever return the obligation?

LOFTY. A bagatelle, a mere bagatelle! But I see your heart is laboring to be grateful. You shall be grateful. It would be cruel to disappoint you.

HONEYWOOD. How? Teach me the manner. Is there any way?

LOFTY. From this moment you're mine. Yes, my friend, you shall know it—I'm in love.

HONEYWOOD. And can I assist you?

LOFTY. Nobody so well.

HONEYWOOD. In what manner? I'm all impatience.

LOFTY. You shall make love for me.

HONEYWOOD. And to whom shall I speak in your favor?

LOFTY. To a lady with whom you have great interest, I assure you—Miss Richland.

HONEYWOOD. Miss Richland!

LOFTY. Yes, Miss Richland. She has struck the blow up to the hilt in my bosom, by Jupiter!

HONEYWOOD. Heavens, was ever anything more unfortunate! It is too much to be endured.

LOFTY. Unfortunate, indeed! And yet I can endure it till you have opened the affair to her for me. Between ourselves, I think she likes me. I'm not apt to boast, but I think she does.

HONEYWOOD. Indeed! But do you know the person you apply to?

LOFTY. Yes, I know you are her friend and mine; that's enough. To you, therefore, I commit the success of my passion. I'll say no more; let friendship do the rest. I have only to add that if at any time my little interest can be of service—but, hang it! I'll make no promises—you know my interest is yours at any time. No apologies, my friend, I'll not be answered; it shall be so. *Exit*

HONEYWOOD. Open, generous, unsuspecting man! He little thinks that I love her too; and with such an ardent passion!—But then it was ever but a vain and hopeless one—my torment, my persecution! What shall I do?—Love, friendship, a hopeless passion, a deserving friend! Love, that has been my tormentor; a friend, that has, perhaps, distressed himself to serve me.—It shall be so! Yes, I will discard the fondling hope from my bosom, and exert all my influence in his favor. And yet to see her in the possession of another—Insupportable! But then, to betray a generous, trusting friend—Worse, worse! Yes, I'm resolved. Let me but be the instrument of their happiness, and then quit a country where I must forever despair of finding my own. *Exit*

Enter OLIVIA *and* GARNET, *who carries a milliner's box*

OLIVIA. Dear me, I wish this journey were over. No news of Jarvis yet? I believe the old peevish creature delays purely to vex me.

GARNET. Why, to be sure, madam, I did hear him say, a little snubbing before marriage would teach you to bear it the better afterwards.

OLIVIA. To be gone a full hour, tho' he had only to get a bill changed in the City! How provoking!

GARNET. I'll lay my life, Mr. Leontine, that had twice as much to do, is setting off by this time from his inn; and here you are left behind.

OLIVIA. Well, let us be prepared for his coming, however. Are you sure you have omitted nothing, Garnet?

GARNET. Not a stick, madam—all's here. Yet I wish you could take the white and silver to be married in. It's the worst luck in the world, in anything but white. I knew one Bett Stubbs, of our town, that was married in red; and, as sure as eggs is eggs, the bridegroom and she had a miff before morning.

OLIVIA. No matter. I'm all impatience till we are out of the house.

GARNET. Bless me, madam, I had almost forgot the wedding ring!—The sweet little thing—I don't think it would go on my little finger. And what if I put in a gentleman's night-cap, in case of necessity, madam?—But here's Jarvis.

Enter JARVIS

OLIVIA. O Jarvis, are you come at last? We have been ready this half-hour. Now let's be going. Let us fly!

JARVIS. Aye, to Jericho; for we shall have no going to Scotland this bout, I fancy.

OLIVIA. How! what's the matter?

JARVIS. Money, money, is the matter, madam. We have got no money. What the plague do you send me of your fool's errand for? My master's bill upon the City is not worth a rush. Here it is; Mrs. Garnet may pin up her hair with it.

OLIVIA. Undone! How could Honeywood serve us so! What shall we do? Can't we go without it?

JARVIS. Go to Scotland without money! To Scotland without money! Lord, how some people understand geography! We might as well set sail for Patagonia upon a cork jacket.

OLIVIA. Such a disappointment! What a base, insincere man was your master, to serve us in this manner! Is this his good-nature?

JARVIS. Nay, don't talk ill of my master, madam. I won't bear to hear anybody talk ill of him but myself.

GARNET. Bless us! now I think on't, madam, you need not be under any uneasiness: I saw Mr. Leontine receive forty guineas from his father just before he set out, and he can't yet have left the inn. A short letter will reach him there.

OLIVIA. Well remembered, Garnet; I'll write immediately.—How's this! Bless me, my hand trembles so, I can't write a word. Do you write, Garnet; and, upon second thought, it will be better from you.

GARNET. Truly, madam, I write and indite but poorly. I never was 'cute at my learning. But I'll do what I can to please you. Let me see. All out of my own head, I suppose?

OLIVIA. Whatever you please.

GARNET. (*Writing*) Muster Croaker—Twenty guineas, madam?

OLIVIA. Aye, twenty will do.

GARNET. At the bar of the Talbot till called for. Expedition—will be blown up—all of a flame—quick dispatch—Cupid, the little god of love.—I conclude it, madam, with Cupid; I love to see a love-letter end like poetry.

OLIVIA. Well, well, what you please—anything. But how shall we send it? I can trust none of the servants of this family.

GARNET. Odso, madam, Mr. Honeywood's butler is in the next room. He's a dear, sweet man; he'll do anything for me.

JARVIS. He! the dog, he'll certainly commit some blunder. He's drunk and sober ten times a day.

OLIVIA. No matter. Fly, Garnet; anybody we can trust will do.

Exit GARNET

Well, Jarvis, now we can have nothing more to interrupt us; you may take up the things and carry them on to the inn.—Have you no hands, Jarvis?

JARVIS. Soft and fair, young lady. You, that are going to be married, think things can never be done too fast; but we, that are old and know what we are about, must elope methodically, madam.

OLIVIA. Well, sure, if my indiscretions were to be done over again—

JARVIS. My life for it, you would do them ten times over.

OLIVIA. Why will you talk so? If you knew how unhappy they make me—

JARVIS. Very unhappy, no doubt. I was once just as unhappy when I was going to be married myself. I'll tell you a story about that— 266

OLIVIA. A story! when I'm all impatience to be away! Was there ever such a dilatory creature!—

JARVIS. Well, madam, if we must march, why, we will march, that's all. Tho', odds bobs, we have still forgot one thing we should never travel without—a case of good razors and a box of shaving-powder. But no matter, I believe we shall be pretty well shaved by the way. (*Going*) 276

Enter GARNET

GARNET. Undone, undone, madam! Ah, Mr. Jarvis, you said right enough. As sure as death, Mr. Honeywood's rogue of a drunken butler dropped the letter before he went ten yards from the door. There's old Croaker has just picked it up, and is this moment reading it to himself in the hall.

OLIVIA. Unfortunate! We shall be discovered. 285

GARNET. No, madam, don't be uneasy; he can make neither head nor tail of it. To be sure he looks as if he was broke loose from Bedlam about it, but he can't find what it means for all that. O lud, he is coming this way all in the horrors! 291

OLIVIA. Then let us leave the house this instant, for fear he should ask further questions. In the meantime, Garnet, do you write and send off just such another. *Exeunt*

Enter CROAKER

CROAKER. Death and destruction! Are all the horrors of air, fire, and water to be levelled only at me? Am I only to be singled out for gunpowder-plots, combustibles, and conflagration? Here it is—an incendiary letter dropped at my door. "To Muster Croaker, these with speed." Aye, aye, plain enough the direction: all in the genuine incendiary spelling, and as cramp as the devil. "With speed." Oh, confound your speed!—But let me read it once more. (*Reads*) "Muster Croaker, as sone as yoew see this, leve twenty gunnes at the bar of the Talboot tell caled for, or yowe and yower experetion will be al blown up." Ah, but too plain. Blood and gunpowder in every line of it. Blown up!—murderous dog! All blown up! Heavens, what have I and my poor family done, to be all blown up? (*Reads*) "Our pockets are low, and money we must have." Aye, there's the reason; they'll blow us up because they have got low pockets. (*Reads*) "It is but a short time you have to consider; for if this takes wind, the house will quickly be all of a flame." Inhuman monsters! blow us up, and then burn us! The earthquake at Lisbon was but a bonfire to it. (*Reads*) "Make quick dispatch, and so no more at present. But may Cupid, the little god of love, go with you wherever you go." The little god of love! Cupid, the little god of love, go with me!—Go you to the devil, you and your little Cupid together. I'm so frightened, I scarce know whether I sit, stand, or go. Perhaps this moment I'm treading on lighted matches, blazing brimstone, and barrels of gunpowder. They are preparing to blow me up into the clouds. Murder! we shall be all burnt in our beds; we shall be all burnt in our beds! 335

Enter MISS RICHLAND

MISS RICHLAND. Lord, sir, what's the matter?

CROAKER. Murder's the matter! We shall all be blown up in our beds before morning!

MISS RICHLAND. I hope not, sir. 340

CROAKER. What signifies what you hope, madam, when I have a certificate of it here in my hand? Will nothing alarm my family? Sleeping and eating, sleeping and eating, is the only work from morning till night in my house. My insensible crew could sleep, tho' rocked by an earthquake, and fry beef-steaks at a volcano. 348

MISS RICHLAND. But, sir, you have alarmed them so often already; we have nothing but earthquakes, famines, plagues, and mad dogs, from year's end to year's end.

You remember, sir, it is not above a month ago you assured us of a conspiracy among the bakers, to poison us in our bread, and so kept the whole family a week upon potatoes. 357

CROAKER. And potatoes were too good for them.—But why do I stand talking here with a girl, when I should be facing the enemy without? Here, John, Nicodemus, search the house! Look into the cellars to see if there be any combustibles below; and above, in the apartments, that no matches be thrown in at the windows. Let all the fires be put out, and let the engine be drawn out in the yard, to play upon the house in case of necessity. *Exit* 368

MISS RICHLAND. (*Alone*) What can he mean by all this? Yet why should I enquire, when he alarms us in this manner almost every day?—But Honeywood has desired an interview with me in private. What can he mean? or, rather, what means this palpitation at his approach? It is the first time he ever showed anything in his conduct that seemed particular. Sure he cannot mean to—but he's here. 378

Enter HONEYWOOD

HONEYWOOD. I presumed to solicit this interview, madam, before I left town, to be permitted—

MISS RICHLAND. Indeed! Leaving town, sir? 383

HONEYWOOD. Yes, madam—perhaps the kingdom. I have presumed, I say, to desire the favor of this interview,—in order to disclose something which our long friendship prompts. And yet my fears— 388

MISS RICHLAND. (*Aside*) His fears! What are his fears to mine!—We have indeed been long acquainted, sir—very long. If I remember, our first meeting was at the French ambassador's.—Do you recollect how you were pleased to rally me upon my complexion there? 395

HONEYWOOD. Perfectly, madam. I presumed to reprove you for painting, but your warmer blushes soon convinced the company that the coloring was all from nature.

MISS RICHLAND. And yet you only meant it in your good-natured way, to make me pay a compliment to myself. In the same manner you danced that night with the most awkward woman in company because you saw nobody else would take her out. 405

HONEYWOOD. Yes; and was rewarded the next night by dancing with the finest woman in company, whom everybody wished to take out. 409

MISS RICHLAND. Well, sir, if you thought so then, I fear your judgment has since corrected the errors of a first impression. We generally show to most advantage at first. Our sex are like poor tradesmen that put all their best goods to be seen at the windows. 416

HONEYWOOD. The first impression, madam, did indeed deceive me. I expected to find a woman with all the faults of conscious, flattered beauty; I expected to find her vain and insolent. But every day has since taught me that it is possible to possess sense without pride, and beauty without affectation. 423

MISS RICHLAND. This, sir, is a style very unusual with Mr. Honeywood, and I should be glad to know why he thus attempts to increase that vanity which his own lessons have taught me to despise. 428

HONEYWOOD. I ask pardon, madam. Yet, from our long friendship, I presumed I might have some right to offer, without offence, what you may refuse without offending.

MISS RICHLAND. Sir! I beg you'd reflect tho' I fear I shall scarce have any power to refuse a request of yours, yet you may be precipitate. Consider, sir. 436

HONEYWOOD. I own my rashness, but as I plead the cause of friendship, of one who loves—don't be alarmed, madam—who loves you with the most ardent passion, whose whole happiness is placed in you— 441

MISS RICHLAND. I fear, sir, I shall never find whom you mean, by this description of him.

HONEYWOOD. Ah, madam, it but too plainly points him out, tho' he should be too humble himself to urge his pretensions or you too modest to understand them. 448

MISS RICHLAND. Well, it would be affectation any longer to pretend ignorance, and I will own, sir, I have long been prejudiced in his favor. It was but natural to wish to make his heart mine, as he seemed himself ignorant of its value.

HONEYWOOD. (*Aside*) I see she always loved him.—I find, madam, you're already sensible of his worth, his passion. How happy is my friend, to be the favorite of one with such sense to distinguish merit, and such beauty to reward it.

MISS RICHLAND. Your friend, sir!—What friend?

HONEYWOOD. My best friend—my friend Mr. Lofty, madam.

MISS RICHLAND. He, sir!

HONEYWOOD. Yes, he, madam. He is, indeed, what your warmest wishes might have formed him, and to his other qualities he adds that of the most passionate regard for you.

MISS RICHLAND. Amazement!—No more of this, I beg you, sir.

HONEYWOOD. I see your confusion, madam, and know how to interpret it. And, since I so plainly read the language of your heart, shall I make my friend happy by communicating your sentiments?

MISS RICHLAND. By no means.

HONEYWOOD. Excuse me, I must; I know you desire it.

MISS RICHLAND. Mr. Honeywood, let me tell you that you wrong my sentiments and yourself. When I first applied to your friendship, I expected advice and assistance; but now, sir, I see that it is in vain to expect happiness from him who has been so bad an economist of his own, and that I must disclaim his friendship who ceases to be a friend to himself. *Exit*

HONEYWOOD. How is this? She has confessed she loved him, and yet she seemed to part in displeasure! Can I have done anything to reproach myself with? No, I believe not; yet, after all, these things should not be done by a third person. I should have spared her confusion. My friendship carried me a little too far.

Enter CROAKER, *with the letter in his hand, and* MRS. CROAKER

MRS. CROAKER. Ha! ha! ha! And so, my dear, it's your supreme wish that I should be quite wretched upon this occasion? Ha! ha!

CROAKER. (*Mimicking*) Ha! ha! ha! And so, my dear, it's your supreme pleasure to give me no better consolation?

MRS. CROAKER. Positively, my dear; what is this incendiary stuff and trumpery to me? Our house may travel through the air like the house of Loretto, for aught I care, if I am to be miserable in it.

CROAKER. Would to Heaven it were converted into a house of correction for your benefit! Have we not everything to alarm us? Perhaps this very moment the tragedy is beginning.

MRS. CROAKER. Then let us reserve our distress till the rising of the curtain, or give them the money they want and have done with them.

CROAKER. Give them my money!—And pray, what right have they to my money?

MRS. CROAKER. And pray, what right then have you to my good humor?

CROAKER. And so your good humor advises me to part with my money? Why then, to tell your good humor a piece of my mind, I'd sooner part with my wife. Here's Mr. Honeywood; see what he'll say to it.—My dear Honeywood, look at this incendiary letter, dropped at my door. It will freeze you with terror; and yet lovey here can read it—can read it, and laugh!

MRS. CROAKER. Yes, and so will Mr. Honeywood.

CROAKER. If he does, I'll suffer to be hanged the next minute in the rogue's place, that's all.

MRS. CROAKER. Speak, Mr. Honeywood; is there anything more foolish than my husband's fright upon this occasion?

HONEYWOOD. It would not become me to decide, madam, but doubtless the greatness of his terrors now, will but invite them to renew their villainy another time.

MRS. CROAKER. I told you he'd be of my opinion.

CROAKER. How, sir! do you maintain that I should lie down under such an injury, and show neither by my tears nor complaints that I have something of the spirit of a man in me?

HONEYWOOD. Pardon me, sir. You ought to make the loudest complaints if you desire redress. The surest way to have redress is to be earnest in the pursuit of it.

CROAKER. Aye, whose opinion is he of now?

MRS. CROAKER. But don't you think that laughing off our fears is the best way?

HONEYWOOD. What is the best, madam, few can say; but I'll maintain it to be a very wise way.

CROAKER. But we're talking of the best. Surely the best way is to face the enemy in the field, and not wait till he plunders us in our very bed-chamber.

HONEYWOOD. Why, sir, as to the best, that—that's a very wise way too.

MRS. CROAKER. But can anything be more absurd than to double our distresses by our apprehensions, and put it in the power of every low fellow that can scrawl ten words of wretched spelling, to torment us?

HONEYWOOD. Without doubt, nothing more absurd.

CROAKER. How! would it not be more absurd to despise the rattle till we are bit by the snake?

HONEYWOOD. Without doubt, perfectly absurd.

CROAKER. Then you are of my opinion?

HONEYWOOD. Entirely.

MRS. CROAKER. And you reject mine?

HONEYWOOD. Heavens forbid, madam! No, sure, no reasoning can be more just than yours. We ought certainly to despise malice if we cannot oppose it, and not make the incendiary's pen as fatal to our repose as the highwayman's pistol.

MRS. CROAKER. Oh! then you think I'm quite right?

HONEYWOOD. Perfectly right.

CROAKER. A plague of plagues, we can't be both right! I ought to be sorry, or I ought to be glad. My hat must be on my head, or my hat must be off.

MRS. CROAKER. Certainly, in two opposite opinions, if one be perfectly reasonable, the other can't be perfectly right.

HONEYWOOD. And why may not both be right, madam?—Mr. Croaker in earnestly seeking redress, and you in waiting the event with good humor? Pray, let me see the letter again. I have it; this letter requires twenty guineas to be left at the bar of the Talbot inn. If it be indeed an incendiary letter, what if you and I, sir, go there and, when the writer comes to be paid for his expected booty, seize him?

CROAKER. My dear friend, it's the very thing—the very thing. While I walk by the door, you shall plant yourself in ambush near the bar, burst out upon the miscreant like a masked battery, extort a confession at once, and so hang him up by surprise.

HONEYWOOD. Yes, but I would not choose to exercise too much severity. It is my maxim, sir, that crimes generally punish themselves.

CROAKER. (*Ironically*) Well, but we may upbraid him a little, I suppose?

HONEYWOOD. Aye, but not punish him too rigidly.

CROAKER. Well, well, leave that to my own benevolence.

HONEYWOOD. Well, I do; but remember that universal benevolence is the first law of nature.

Exeunt HONEYWOOD *and* MRS. CROAKER

CROAKER. Yes, and my universal benevolence will hang the dog if he had as many necks as a hydra. [*Exit*]

ACT V

SCENE. *An inn*

Enter OLIVIA *and* JARVIS

OLIVIA. Well, we have got safe to the inn, however. Now, if the post-chaise were ready—

JARVIS. The horses are just finishing their oats, and, as they are not going to be married, they choose to take their own time.

OLIVIA. You are forever giving wrong motives to my impatience. 8

JARVIS. Be as impatient as you will, the horses must take their own time; besides, you don't consider, we have got no answer from our fellow-traveller yet. If we hear nothing from Mr. Leontine, we have only one way left us. 14

OLIVIA. What way?

JARVIS. The way home again.

OLIVIA. Not so! I have made a resolution to go, and nothing shall induce me to break it.

JARVIS. Aye, resolutions are well kept when they jump with inclination. However, I'll go hasten things without. And I'll call, too, at the bar, to see if anything should be left for us there. Don't be in such a plaguy hurry, madam, and we shall go the faster, I promise you. *Exit* 25

Enter Landlady

LANDLADY. What! Solomon, why don't you move? Pipes and tobacco for the Lamb[1] there.—Will nobody answer? To the Dolphin[1]: quick. The Angel[1] has been outrageous this half-hour.—Did your ladyship call, madam? 31

OLIVIA. No, madam.

LANDLADY. I find as you're for Scotland, madam—but that's no business of mine; married, or not married, I ask no questions. To be sure, we had a sweet little couple set off from this two days ago for the same place. The gentleman, for a tailor, was, to be sure, as fine a spoken tailor as ever blew froth from a full pot; and the young lady, so bashful it was near half an hour before we could get her to finish a pint of raspberry between us. 43

OLIVIA. But this gentleman and I are not going to be married, I assure you.

LANDLADY. Maybe not. That's no business of mine; for certain, Scotch marriages seldom turn out.—There was, of my own knowledge, Miss Macfag, that married her father's footman—Alack-a-day, she and her husband soon parted, and now keep separate cellars in Hedge-lane. 52

OLIVIA. (*Aside*) A very pretty picture of what lies before me.

Enter LEONTINE

LEONTINE. My dear Olivia, my anxiety, till you were out of danger, was too great to be resisted. I could not help coming to see you set out, though it exposes us to a discovery.

OLIVIA. May everything you do prove as fortunate. Indeed, Leontine, we have been most cruelly disappointed. Mr. Honeywood's bill upon the City has, it seems, been protested, and we have been utterly at a loss how to proceed. 64

LEONTINE. How! an offer of his own too? Sure, he could not mean to deceive us!

OLIVIA. Depend upon his sincerity; he only mistook the desire for the power of serving us. But let us think no more of it. I believe the post-chaise is ready by this.

LANDLADY. Not quite yet: and, begging your ladyship's pardon, I don't think your ladyship quite ready for the post-chaise. The north road is a cold place, madam. I have a drop in the house of as pretty raspberry as ever was tipt over tongue. Just a thimblefull to keep the wind off your stomach. To be sure, the last couples we had here, they said it was a perfect nosegay. Ecod, I sent them both away as good-natured—up went the blinds, round went the wheels, and "Drive away, post-boy!" was the word. 82

Enter CROAKER

CROAKER. Well, while my friend Honeywood is upon the post of danger at the bar, it must be my business to have an eye about me here. I think I know an incendiary's look; for wherever the devil makes a purchase, he never fails to set his mark.—Ha! who have we here? My son and daughter! What can they be doing here? 90

LANDLADY. I tell you, madam, it will do you good; I think I know by this time what 's good for the north road. It's a raw night, madam.—Sir— 94

[1] The names given rooms from their hangings.

LEONTINE. Not a drop more, good madam. I should now take it as a greater favor if you hasten the horses, for I am afraid to be seen myself.

LANDLADY. That shall be done.—Wha, Solomon! are you all dead there? Wha, Solomon, I say! *Exit, bawling*

OLIVIA. Well, I dread lest an expedition begun in fear should end in repentance. Every moment we stay increases our danger and adds to my apprehensions.

LEONTINE. There's no danger. Trust me, my dear; there can be none. If Honeywood has acted with honor and kept my father, as he promised, in employment till we are out of danger, nothing can interrupt our journey.

OLIVIA. I have no doubt of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity, and even his desires to serve us. My fears are from your father's suspicions; a mind so disposed to be alarmed without a cause, will be but too ready when there's a reason.

LEONTINE. Why, let him, when we are out of his power. But believe me, Olivia, you have no great reason to dread his resentment. His repining temper, as it does no manner of injury to himself, so will it never do harm to others. He only frets to keep himself employed, and scolds for his private amusement.

OLIVIA. I don't know that, but I'm sure on some occasions it makes him look most shockingly.

CROAKER. (*Discovering himself*) How does he look now?—How does he look now?

OLIVIA. Ah!

LEONTINE. Undone!

CROAKER. How do I look now? Sir, I am your very humble servant. Madam, I am yours. What, you are going off, are you? Then first, if you please, take a word or two from me with you before you go. Tell me first where you are going; and when you have told me that, perhaps I shall know as little as I did before.

LEONTINE. If that be so, our answer might but increase your displeasure without adding to your information.

CROAKER. I want no information from you, puppy; and you too, good madam, what answer have you got? Eh! (*A cry without*, "Stop him!")—I think I heard a noise. My friend Honeywood without—has he seized the incendiary? Ah, no; for now I hear no more on't.

LEONTINE. Honeywood without!—Then, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood that directed you hither?

CROAKER. No, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood conducted me hither.

LEONTINE. Is it possible?

CROAKER. Possible! Why, he's in the house now, sir—more anxious about me than my own son, sir.

LEONTINE. Then, sir, he's a villain.

CROAKER. How, sirrah!—a villain, because he takes most care of your father? I'll not bear it. I tell you, I'll not bear it. Honeywood is a friend to the family, and I'll have him treated as such.

LEONTINE. I shall study to repay his friendship as it deserves.

CROAKER. Ah, rogue, if you knew how earnestly he entered into my griefs and pointed out the means to detect them, you would love him as I do. (*A cry without*, "Stop him!") Fire and fury! they have seized the incendiary. They have the villain, the incendiary in view! [*Calls out, running*] Stop him! stop an incendiary! a murderer! stop him! *Exit*

OLIVIA. Oh, my terrors! What can this tumult mean?

LEONTINE. Some new mark, I suppose, of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity. But we shall have satisfaction—he shall give me instant satisfaction!

OLIVIA. It must not be, my Leontine, if you value my esteem or my happiness. Whatever be our fate, let us not add guilt to our misfortunes. Consider that our innocence will shortly be all that we have left us. You must forgive him.

LEONTINE. Forgive him! Has he not in every instance betrayed us—forced me to borrow money from him, which appears a mere trick to delay us, promised to keep my father engaged till we were out of danger,

and here brought him to the very scene of our escape?

OLIVIA. Don't be precipitate. We may yet be mistaken.

Enter Postboy, *dragging in* JARVIS, HONEYWOOD *entering soon after*

POSTBOY. Aye, master, we have him safe enough. Here is the incendiary dog. I'm entitled to the reward; I'll take my oath I saw him ask for the money at the bar, and then run for it.

HONEYWOOD. Come, bring him along. Let us see him. Let him learn to blush for his crimes. (*Discovering his mistake*)—Death! what's here? Jarvis, Leontine, Olivia! What can all this mean?

JARVIS. Why, I'll tell you what it means —that I was an old fool, and that you are my master—that's all.

HONEYWOOD. Confusion!

LEONTINE. Yes sir, I find you have kept your word with me. After such baseness, I wonder how you can venture to see the man you have injured.

HONEYWOOD. My dear Leontine, by my life, my honor—

LEONTINE. Peace, peace, for shame! and do not continue to aggravate baseness by hypocrisy. I know you, sir; I know you.

HONEYWOOD. Why, won't you hear me? By all that's just, I knew not—

LEONTINE. Hear you, sir! to what purpose? I now see through all your low arts—your ever complying with every opinion; your never refusing any request: your friendship as common as a prostitute's favors, and as fallacious. All these, sir, have long been contemptible to the world, and are now perfectly so to me.

HONEYWOOD. (*Aside*) Ha! contemptible to the world! That reaches me.

LEONTINE. All the seeming sincerity of your professions, I now find, were only allurements to betray, and all your seeming regret for their consequences, only calculated to cover the cowardice of your heart. Draw, villain!

Enter CROAKER, *out of breath*

CROAKER. Where is the villain? Where is the incendiary? (*Seizing the* Postboy) Hold him fast, the dog; he has the gallows in his face. Come, you dog, confess—confess all, and hang yourself.

POSTBOY. Zounds! master, what do you throttle me for?

CROAKER. (*Beating him*) Dog, do you resist? do you resist?

POSTBOY. Zounds! master, I'm not he; there's the man that we thought was the rogue, and turns out to be one of the company.

CROAKER. How!

HONEYWOOD. Mr. Croaker, we have all been under a strange mistake here; I find there is nobody guilty. It was all an error—entirely an error of our own.

CROAKER. And I say, sir, that you're in an error; for there's guilt and double guilt—a plot, a damned jesuitical, pestilential plot, and I must have proof of it.

HONEYWOOD. Do but hear me.

CROAKER. What! you intend to bring 'em off, I suppose. I'll hear nothing.

HONEYWOOD. Madam, you seem at least calm enough to hear reason.

OLIVIA. Excuse me.

HONEYWOOD. Good Jarvis, let me then explain it to you.

JARVIS. What signifies explanations when the thing is done?

HONEYWOOD. Will nobody hear me? Was there ever such a set, so blinded by passion and prejudice? (*To the* Postboy)—My good friend, I believe you'll be surprised when I assure you—

POSTBOY. Sure me nothing—I'm sure of nothing but a good beating.

CROAKER. Come then, you, madam, if you ever hope for any favor or forgiveness, tell me sincerely all you know of this affair.

OLIVIA. Unhappily, sir, I'm but too much the cause of your suspicions. You see before you, sir, one that with false pretences has stepped into your family to betray it—not your daughter—

CROAKER. Not my daughter?

OLIVIA. Not your daughter—but a mean deceiver—who—support me, I cannot!—
[*She faints*]

HONEYWOOD. Help, she's going! give her air!

CROAKER. Aye, aye, take the young woman to the air. I would not hurt a hair of her head, whosever daughter she may be—not so bad as that neither.

Exeunt all but CROAKER

CROAKER. Yes, yes, all's out; I now see the whole affair. My son is either married, or going to be so, to this lady, whom he imposed upon me as his sister. Aye, certainly so; and yet I don't find it afflicts me so much as one might think. There's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes beforehand; we never feel them when they come.

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and* SIR WILLIAM

SIR WILLIAM. But how do you know, madam, that my nephew intends setting off from this place?

MISS RICHLAND. My maid assured me he was come to this inn, and my own knowledge of his intending to leave the kingdom suggested the rest. But what do I see? My guardian here before us!—Who, my dear sir, could have expected meeting you here? to what accident do we owe this pleasure?

CROAKER. To a fool, I believe.

MISS RICHLAND. But to what purpose did you come?

CROAKER. To play the fool.

MISS RICHLAND. But with whom?

CROAKER. With greater fools than myself.

MISS RICHLAND. Explain.

CROAKER. Why, Mr. Honeywood brought me here, to do nothing now I am here; and my son is going to be married to I don't know who, that is here. So now you are as wise as I am.

MISS RICHLAND. Married! to whom, sir?

CROAKER. To Olivia, my daughter, as I took her to be; but who the devil she is, or whose daughter she is, I know no more than the man in the moon.

SIR WILLIAM. Then, sir, I can inform you, and, tho' a stranger, yet you shall find me a friend to your family. It will be enough at present to assure you that both in point of birth and fortune, the young lady is at least your son's equal. Being left by her father, Sir James Woodville—

CROAKER. Sir James Woodville! What, of the West?

SIR WILLIAM. Being left by him, I say, to the care of a mercenary wretch whose only aim was to secure her fortune to himself, she was sent to France, under pretence of education, and there every art was tried to fix her for life in a convent, contrary to her inclinations. Of this I was informed upon my arrival at Paris, and, as I had been once her father's friend, I did all in my power to frustrate her guardian's base intentions. I had even meditated to rescue her from his authority, when your son stepped in with more pleasing violence, gave her liberty, and you a daughter.

CROAKER. But I intend to have a daughter of my own choosing, sir—a young lady, sir, whose fortune, by my interest with those who have interest, will be double what my son has a right to expect. Do you know Mr. Lofty, sir?

SIR WILLIAM. Yes, sir, and know that you are deceived in him. But step this way, and I'll convince you.

(CROAKER *and* SIR WILLIAM *seem to confer*)

Enter HONEYWOOD

HONEYWOOD. Obstinate man, still to persist in his outrage! Insulted by him, despised by all, I now begin to grow contemptible, even to myself. How have I sunk by too great an assiduity to please! How have I overtaxed all my abilities lest the approbation of a single fool should escape me! But all is now over; I have survived my reputation, my fortune, my friendships, and nothing remains henceforward for me but solitude and repentance.

MISS RICHLAND. Is it true, Mr. Honeywood, that you are setting off without taking

leave of your friends? The report is that you are quitting England. Can it be? 376

HONEYWOOD. Yes, madam, and though I am so unhappy as to have fallen under your displeasure, yet, thank Heaven, I leave you to happiness—to one who loves you and deserves your love—to one who has power to procure you affluence, and generosity to improve your enjoyment of it. 383

MISS RICHLAND. And are you sure, sir, that the gentleman you mean is what you describe him?

HONEYWOOD. I have the best assurances of it—his serving me. He does indeed deserve the highest happiness, and that is in your power to confer. As for me, weak and wavering as I have been, obliged by all, and incapable of serving any, what happiness can I find but in solitude? What hope but in being forgotten? 394

MISS RICHLAND. A thousand! to live among friends that esteem you, whose happiness it will be to be permitted to oblige you.

HONEYWOOD. No, madam, my resolution is fixed. Inferiority among strangers is easy, but among those that once were equals, insupportable. Nay, to show you how far my resolution can go, I can now speak with calmness of my former follies, my vanity, my dissipation, my weakness. I will even confess that, among the number of my other presumptions, I had the insolence to think of loving you. Yes, madam, while I was pleading the passion of another, my heart was tortured with its own. But it is over; it was unworthy our friendship, and let it be forgotten. 411

MISS RICHLAND. You amaze me!

HONEYWOOD. But you'll forgive it, I know you will; since the confession should not have come from me even now but to convince you of the sincerity of my intention of —never mention it more. (*Going*)

MISS RICHLAND. Stay, sir, one moment—Ha! he here— 419

Enter LOFTY

LOFTY. Is the coast clear? None but friends? I have followed you here with a trifling piece of intelligence, but it goes no farther; things are not yet ripe for a discovery. I have spirits working at a certain board; your affair at the Treasury will be done in less than—a thousand years. Mum!

MISS RICHLAND. Sooner, sir, I should hope. 428

LOFTY. Why, yes, I believe it may if it falls into proper hands that know where to push and where to parry—that know how the land lies—eh, Honeywood? 432

MISS RICHLAND. It is fallen into yours.

LOFTY. Well, to keep you no longer in suspense, your thing is done. It is done, I say—that's all. I have just had assurances from Lord Neverout, that the claim has been examined and found admissible. *Quietus* is the word, madam. 439

HONEYWOOD. But how? His lordship has been at Newmarket these ten days.

LOFTY. Indeed! Then Sir Gilbert Goose must have been most damnably mistaken. I had it of him. 444

MISS RICHLAND. He? Why, Sir Gilbert and his family have been in the country this month.

LOFTY. This month! It must certainly be so—Sir Gilbert's letter did come to me from Newmarket, so that he must have met his lordship there; and so it came about. I have his letter about me; I'll read it to you. (*Taking out a large bundle*) That's from Paoli of Corsica; that from the Marquis of Squilachi.—Have you a mind to see a letter from Count Poniatowski, now King of Poland?—Honest Pon—(*Searching*)—Oh, sir, what! are you here, too? I'll tell you what, honest friend, if you have not absolutely delivered my letter to Sir William Honeywood, you may return it. The thing will do without him. 462

SIR WILLIAM. Sir, I have delivered it, and must inform you, it was received with the most mortifying contempt.

CROAKER. Contempt! Mr. Lofty, what can that mean? 467

LOFTY. Let him go on—let him go on, I say. You'll find it come to something presently.

Sir William. Yes, sir; I believe you'll be amazed if, after waiting some time in the ante-chamber, after being surveyed with insolent curiosity by the passing servants, I was at last assured that Sir William Honeywood knew no such person, and I must certainly have been imposed upon.

Lofty. Good! Let me die, very good!—Ha! ha! ha!

Croaker. Now, for my life I can't find out half the goodness of it.

Lofty. You can't? Ha! ha!

Croaker. No, for the soul of me! I think it was as confounded a bad answer as ever was sent from one private gentleman to another.

Lofty. And so you can't find out the force of the message? Why, I was in the house at that very time. Ha! ha! It was I that sent that very answer to my own letter. Ha! ha!

Croaker. Indeed! How? why?

Lofty. In one word, things between Sir William and me must be behind the curtain. A party has many eyes. He sides with Lord Buzzard, I side with Sir Gilbert Goose. So that unriddles the mystery.

Croaker. And so it does, indeed; and all my suspicions are over.

Lofty. Your suspicions! What, then, you have been suspecting—you have been suspecting, have you? Mr. Croaker, you and I were friends; we are friends no longer. Never talk to me. It's over; I say, it's over.

Croaker. As I hope for your favor, I did not mean to offend. It escaped me. Don't be discomposed!

Lofty. Zounds! sir, but I am discomposed, and will be discomposed. To be treated thus! Who am I? Was it for this I have been dreaded both by ins and outs? Have I been libelled in the *Gazetteer*, and praised in the *St. James's*?[1] Have I been chaired at Wildman's, and a speaker at Merchant Tailors' Hall? Have I had my hand to addresses, and my head in the print-shops—and talk to me of suspects?

Croaker. My dear sir, be pacified. What can you have but asking pardon?

Lofty. Sir, I will not be pacified.—Suspects! Who am I? To be used thus! have I paid court to men in favor to serve my friends—the Lords of the Treasury, Sir William Honeywood, and the rest of the gang—and talk to me of suspects? Who am I, I say; who am I?

Sir William. Since, sir, you are so pressing for an answer, I'll tell you who you are—a gentleman as well acquainted with politics as with men in power; as well acquainted with persons of fashion as with modesty; with Lords of the Treasury as with truth; and with all, as you are with Sir William Honeywood. I am Sir William Honeywood.

(*Discovering his ensigns of the Bath*)

Croaker. Sir William Honeywood!

Honeywood. (*Aside*) Astonishment! my uncle!

Lofty. So then, my confounded genius has been all this time only leading me up to the garret, in order to fling me out of the window.

Croaker. What, Mr. Importance, and are these your works? Suspect you!—you who have been dreaded by the ins and outs; you, who have had your hand to addresses, and your head stuck up in print-shops! If you were served right, you should have your head stuck up in the pillory.

Lofty. Aye, stick it where you will; for, by the Lord, it cuts but a very poor figure where it sticks at present.

Sir William. Well, Mr. Croaker, I hope you now see how incapable this gentleman is of serving you, and how little Miss Richland has to expect from his influence.

Croaker. Aye, sir, too well I see it; and I can't but say I have had some boding of it these ten days. So I'm resolved, since my son has placed his affections on a lady of moderate fortune, to be satisfied with his choice and not run the hazard of another Mr. Lofty in helping him to a better.

Sir William. I approve your resolution, and here they come to receive a confirmation of your pardon and consent.

[1] Current papers.

Enter MRS. CROAKER, JARVIS, LEONTINE, *and* OLIVIA

MRS. CROAKER. Where's my husband? Come, come, lovey, you must forgive them. Jarvis here has been to tell me the whole affair, and I say you must forgive them. Our own was a stolen match, you know, my dear, and we never had any reason to repent of it.

CROAKER. I wish we could both say so. However, this gentleman, Sir William Honeywood, has been beforehand with you in obtaining their pardon; so, if the two poor fools have a mind to marry, I think we can tack them together without crossing the Tweed for it. (*Joining their hands*) 577

LEONTINE. How blest and unexpected! What, what can we say to such goodness? But our future obedience shall be the best reply. And as for this gentleman, to whom we owe— 582

SIR WILLIAM. Excuse me, sir, if I interrupt your thanks, as I have here an interest that calls me. (*Turning to* HONEYWOOD) Yes, sir, you are surprised to see me, and I own that a desire of correcting your follies led me hither. I saw with indignation the errors of a mind that only sought applause from others—that easiness of disposition which, tho' inclined to the right, had not courage to condemn the wrong. I saw with regret those splendid errors that still took name from some neighboring duty; your charity, that was but injustice; your benevolence, that was but weakness; and your friendship, but credulity. I saw with regret great talents and extensive learning only employed to add sprightliness to error, and increase your perplexities. I saw your mind with a thousand natural charms, but the greatness of its beauty served only to heighten my pity for its prostitution. 603

HONEYWOOD. Cease to upbraid me, sir; I have for some time but too strongly felt the justice of your reproaches. But there is one way still left me. Yes, sir, I have determined this very hour to quit forever a place where I have made myself the voluntary slave of all, and to seek among strangers that fortitude which may give strength to the mind, and marshal all its dissipated virtues. Yet ere I depart, permit me to solicit favor for this gentleman, who, notwithstanding what has happened, has laid me under the most signal obligations. Mr. Lofty— 616

LOFTY. Mr. Honeywood, I'm resolved upon a reformation as well as you. I now begin to find that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth, was a much cunninger fellow than I thought him. And to prove that I design to speak truth for the future, I must now assure you that you owe your late enlargement to another, as, upon my soul, I had no hand in the matter. So now, if any of the company has a mind for preferment, he may take my place; I'm determined to resign. *Exit* [LOFTY] 628

HONEYWOOD. How have I been deceived!

SIR WILLIAM. No, sir, you have been obliged to a kinder, fairer friend, for that favor—to Miss Richland. Would she complete our joy and make the man she has honored by her friendship happy in her love, I shall then forget all and be as blest as the welfare of my dearest kinsman can make me.

MISS RICHLAND. After what is past it would be but affectation to pretend to indifference. Yes, I will own an attachment which I find was more than friendship. And if my entreaties cannot alter his resolution to quit the country, I will even try if my hand has not power to detain him. 643

(*Giving her hand*)

HONEYWOOD. Heavens! How can I have deserved all this? how express my happiness, my gratitude? A moment like this overpays an age of apprehension. 647

CROAKER. Well, now I see content in every face; but Heaven send we be all better this day three months!

SIR WILLIAM. Henceforth, nephew, learn to respect yourself. He who seeks only for applause from without, has all his happiness in another's keeping. 654

HONEYWOOD. Yes, sir, I now too plainly perceive my errors—my vanity, in attempting to please all by fearing to offend any; my meanness, in approving folly lest fools should

disapprove. Henceforth, therefore, it shall be my study to reserve my pity for real distress, my friendship for true merit, and my love for her who first taught me what it is to be happy. [*Exeunt*] 663

EPILOGUE[1]

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY

As puffing quacks some caitiff wretch procure
To swear the pill, or drop, has wrought a cure;
Thus, on the stage, our playwrights still depend
For Epilogues and Prologues on some friend
Who knows each art of coaxing up the town,
And make full many a bitter pill go down.
Conscious of this, our bard has gone about,
And teased each rhyming friend to help him out. 8
"An Epilogue! things can't go on without it;
It could not fail, would you but set about it."
"Young man," cries one (a bard laid up in clover),
"Alas! young man, my writing days are over;
Let boys play tricks and kick the straw—not I;
Your brother Doctor there, perhaps, may try." 14
"What, I! dear sir," the Doctor interposes;
"What, plant my thistle, sir, among his roses!
No, no, I've other contests to maintain;
To-night I head our troops at Warwick-lane."
"Go, ask your manager"—"Who, me? Your pardon;
Those things are not our forte at Covent-garden." 20
Our Author's friends, thus placed at happy distance,
Give him good words indeed, but no assistance.
As some unhappy wight at some new play,
At the pit door stands elbowing away;
While oft, with many a smile, and many a shrug, 25
He eyes the center, where his friends sit snug;
His simpering friends, with pleasure in their eyes,
Sink as he sinks, and as he rises rise.
He nods, they nod; he cringes, they grimace;
But not a soul will budge to give him place.
Since then, unhelped, our bard must now conform 31
"To 'bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,"
Blame where you must, be candid where you can,
And be each critic the *Good-natured Man.*

[1] The author, in expectation of an Epilogue from a friend at Oxford, deferred writing one himself till the very last hour. What is here offered, owes all its success to the graceful manner of the actress who spoke it.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER; OR, THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT

A Comedy by Oliver Goldsmith

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Men

Sir Charles Marlow
Young Marlow (his son)
Hardcastle
Hastings
Tony Lumpkin
Diggory[1]
[Stingo], landlord [of the inn]
Servants [and Country Fellows]

Women

Mrs. Hardcastle
Miss Hardcastle
Miss Neville
[Pimple], maid to Miss Hardcastle

[Scene: *An old-fashioned country house and inn*]

[Time: *Contemporary*]

[DEDICATION]

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

Dear Sir,—By inscribing this slight performance to you I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honor to inform the public that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them that the greatest wit may be found in a character without impairing the most unaffected piety.

I have, particularly, reason to thank you for your partiality to this performance. The undertaking a comedy not merely sentimental was very dangerous; and Mr. Colman, who saw this piece in its various stages, always thought it so. However, I ventured to trust it to the public, and, though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful.

I am, dear sir, your most sincere friend and admirer,

Oliver Goldsmith

PROLOGUE

By David Garrick, Esq.

Enter Mr. Woodward, *dressed in black, and holding a handkerchief to his eyes*

Excuse me, sirs, I pray—I can't yet speak—
I'm crying now—and have been all the week!
'Tis not alone this mourning suit, good masters;
I've that within—for which there are no plasters!
Pray, would you know the reason why I'm crying?
The Comic Muse, long sick, is now a-dying!
And if she goes, my tears will never stop;
For as a play'r, I can't squeeze out one drop.
I am undone, that's all—shall lose my bread—
I'd rather—but that's nothing—lose my head.
When the sweet maid is laid upon the bier,
Shuter and I shall be chief mourners here.
To her a mawkish drab of spurious breed,
Who deals in sentimentals, will succeed!
Poor Ned and I are dead to all intents;
We can as soon speak Greek as sentiments!
Both nervous grown, to keep our spirits up.
We now and then take down a hearty cup.
What shall we do, if Comedy forsake us?
They'll turn us out, and no one else will take us.

[1] No in Q., first impression.

But why can't I be moral?—Let me try—
My heart thus pressing—fixed my face and eye—
With a sententious look, that nothing means,
(Faces are blocks in sentimental scenes)
Thus I begin: "All is not gold that glitters;
Pleasure seems sweet, but proves a glass of bitters.
When Ign'rance enters, Folly is at hand;
Learning is better far than house and land.
Let not your virtue trip; who trips may stumble,
And virtue is not virtue if she tumble."
I give it up—morals won't do for me;
To make you laugh, I must play tragedy.
One hope remains—hearing the maid was ill,
A Doctor comes this night to show his skill.
To cheer her heart, and give your muscles motion,
He, in five draughts prepared, presents a potion;
A kind of magic charm—for be assured,
If you will swallow it, the maid is cured.
But desperate the Doctor and her case is
If you reject the dose and make wry faces!
This truth he boasts, will boast it while he lives;
No poisonous drugs are mixed in what he gives.
Should he succeed, you'll give him his degree;
If not, within he will receive no fee!
The College *you*, must his pretensions back,
Pronounce him "regular," or dub him "quack."

ACT I

SCENE [I]. *A chamber in an old-fashioned house*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MR. HARDCASTLE

MRS. HARDCASTLE. I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs and our neighbor, Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

HARDCASTLE. Aye, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home! In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.[1]

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Aye, *your* times were fine times, indeed; you have been telling us of *them* for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion that looks for all the world like an inn but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

HARDCASTLE. And I love it. I love everything that's old—old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and I believe, Dorothy (*Taking her hand*), you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're forever at your "Dorothys" and your "old wifes." You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan,[2] I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

HARDCASTLE. Let me see; twenty added to twenty makes just fifty and seven.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle. I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

HARDCASTLE. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Aye, you have taught *him* finely.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. No matter. Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

HARDCASTLE. Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

1 At the back, on top of the coach.
2 Traditionally devoted.

MRS. HARDCAST
nothing but hum
you must allow t
HARDCASTLE.
horse-pond. If
frightening the
tens be humor,
day he fasten
chair, and wh
popped my ba
MRS. HARD
The poor boy
any good. A
When he com
knows what
for him?
HARDCASTL
fiddle. No, n
are the only
MRS. HAR
snub the po
shan't have
that looks in
tive.
HARDCAST
one of the
MRS. HA
HARDCASTL
the wrong way.
MRS. HARDCASTL
his lungs.
HARDCASTLE. And
sometimes whoops lik
(TONY *hallooing beh*
there he goes—a very
truly.

Enter TONY, *cr*

MRS. HARDCASTLE.
going, my charmer?
and I a little of you
TONY. I'm in h
stay.
MRS. HARDCASTL
this raw evening,
shockingly.
TONY. I can't s
Pigeons expects
There's some fun

e, but there is still
n an even wager

dear papa, why
ell, if he refuses,
at his indiffer-
for its flattery,
hion, and look
irer. 207
lved! In the
ervants for his
ompany, they
mpany of re-
Exit 212
] Lud, this
in a flutter.
ut last, but I
good-natured;
ed and sheep-
n. Yet can't
being taught
nd can't I—
he husband
222

you're come,
e, Constance, how
Is there anything
Is it one of my
d? Am I in face
228
fectly, my dear. Yet
ess me!—sure, no acci-
mong the canary birds
as your brother or the
r has the last novel
234
; nothing of all this.
—I can scarce get
atened with a lover.
s name—
Marlow.
! 240
son of Sir Charles

ve, the most inti-
ngs, *my* admirer.

They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Never.

MISS NEVILLE. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue he is the modestest man alive, but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp; you understand me.

MISS HARDCASTLE. An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony as usual?

MISS NEVILLE. I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes*. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And her partiality is such that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

MISS NEVILLE. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

MISS HARDCASTLE. My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

MISS NEVILLE. It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself.—But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. *Allons!* Courage, necessary, as our affairs are critical.

MISS HARDCASTLE. "Would it were bedtime, and all were well."[1] *Exeunt*

[SCENE III]. *An alehouse room. Several shabby* FELLOWS *with punch and tobacco.* TONY *at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest, a mallet in his hand*

OMNES. Hurrea! hurrea! hurrea! bravo!

FIRST FELLOW. Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

OMNES. Aye, a song, a song!

TONY. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, the Three Pigeons.

SONG

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning,
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives *genus*[2] a better discerning.
Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians,
Their Quis, and their Quæs, and their Quods,
They're all but a parcel of pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When Methodist preachers come down,
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.[3]
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then come, put the jorum[4] about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons forever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

1 I Henry IV, V, i.

2 I.e. genius. 3 dupe. 4 drinking bowl.

OMNES. Bravo, bravo!

FIRST FELLOW. The 'squire has got spunk in him.

SECOND FELLOW. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's *low*.

THIRD FELLOW. Oh, damn anything that's *low*! I cannot bear it. 42

FOURTH FELLOW. The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time, if so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly. 46

THIRD FELLOW. I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What tho' I am obligated to dance a bear? a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, (*Raising his glass*) if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes—"Water Parted," or the minuet in "Ariadne." 53

SECOND FELLOW. What a pity it is the 'squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him. 57

TONY. Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

SECOND FELLOW. Oh, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls, in the whole county.

TONY. Ecod, and when I'm of age, I'll be no bastard, I promise you! I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with.—But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter Landlord

LANDLORD. There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest, and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle. 78

TONY. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners? 82

LANDLORD. I believe they may. They look woundily[1] like Frenchmen.

TONY. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling.

Exit Landlord

Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. *Exeunt mob* 90

TONY. [*Alone*] Father-in-law has been calling me whelp and hound this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of *that* if he can. 97

Enter Landlord, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS

MARLOW. What a tedious, uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore. 101

HASTINGS. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

MARLOW. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer. 108

HASTINGS. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

TONY. No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in? 114

HASTINGS. Not in the last, sir, but should thank you for information.

TONY. Nor the way you came?

HASTINGS. No, sir; but if you can inform us— 119

TONY. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, or where you are, nor the road you came the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way. 124

MARLOW. We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

[1] Rustic slang.

TONY. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

MARLOW. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

TONY. No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face, a daughter, and a pretty son?

HASTINGS. We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

TONY. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole; the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of?

MARLOW. Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

TONY. He-he-hem!—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

HASTINGS. Unfortunate!

TONY. It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way.—Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's (*Winking upon the* Landlord)—Mr. Hardcastle's, of Quagmire Marsh; you understand me.

LANDLORD. Master Hardcastle's! Lock-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

MARLOW. Cross down Squash Lane!

LANDLORD. Then you were to keep straight forward till you came to four roads.

MARLOW. Come to where four roads meet?

TONY. Aye; but you must be sure to take only one of them.

MARLOW. Oh, sir, you're facetious.

TONY. Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crackskull Common. There you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill—

MARLOW. Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

HASTINGS. What's to be done, Marlow?

MARLOW. This house promises but a poor reception; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

LANDLORD. Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

TONY. And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. (*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted*)—I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fireside, with—three chairs and a bolster?

HASTINGS. I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

MARLOW. And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

TONY. You do, do you? then, let me see—what if you go on a mile further to the Buck's Head? the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole county.

HASTINGS. Oh, ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

LANDLORD. (*Apart to* TONY) Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

TONY. Mum, you fool you. Let *them* find that out. (*To them*) You have only to keep on straight forward till you come to a large, old house by the roadside. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

HASTINGS. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

TONY. No, no. But I tell you, though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence—he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company; and, ecod, if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman and his aunt a justice of peace.

LANDLORD. A troublesome old blade, to be sure, but a[1] keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

1 he.

MARLOW. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

TONY. No, no; straight forward. I'll just step myself and show you a piece of the way. (*To the* Landlord) Mum! 229

LANDLORD. Ah, bless your heart for a sweet, pleasant—damn'd mischievous son of a whore. *Exeunt*

ACT II

SCENE. [*The living room in*] *an old-fashioned house*

Enter HARDCASTLE, *followed by three or four awkward* Servants

HARDCASTLE. Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places and can show that you have been used to good company without ever stirring from home? 6

OMNES. Aye, aye.

HARDCASTLE. When company comes you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again like frighted rabbits in a warren.

OMNES. No, no! 11

HARDCASTLE. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind *my* chair.—But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead, you! See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter. 22

DIGGORY. Aye, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill— 26

HARDCASTLE. You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk and not think of talking; you must see us drink and not think of drinking; you must see us eat and not think of eating. 32

DIGGORY. By the laws, your worship, that's parfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself. 36

HARDCASTLE. Blockhead! Is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlor? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

DIGGORY. Ecod, I thank your worship; I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry. 42

HARDCASTLE. Diggory, you are too talkative.—Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company. 47

DIGGORY. Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gunroom; I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

HARDCASTLE. Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please (*To* DIGGORY).—Eh, why don't you move?

DIGGORY. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion. 63

HARDCASTLE. What, will nobody move?

FIRST SERVANT. I'm not to leave this pleace.

SECOND SERVANT. I'm sure it's no pleace of mine. 68

THIRD SERVANT. Nor mine, for sartain.

DIGGORY. Wauns,[1] and I'm sure it canna be mine.

HARDCASTLE. You numskulls! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved! O you dunces! I find I must begin all over again—But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads. I'll go in the meantime and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate. 79

Exit HARDCASTLE

[1] Cf. "zounds" and "wounds."

DIGGORY. By the elevens, my pleace is gone quite out of my head.

ROGER. I know that my pleace is to be everywhere. 83

FIRST SERVANT. Where the devil is mine?

SECOND SERVANT. My pleace is to be nowhere at all, and so I'ze go about my business. 87

Exeunt Servants, *running about as if frighted, different ways*

Enter Servant *with candles, showing in* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS

SERVANT. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome! This way.

HASTINGS. After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house—antique but creditable. 94

MARLOW. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn. 98

HASTINGS. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly. 103

MARLOW. Travellers, George, must pay in all places; the only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries, in bad inns you are fleeced and starved. 107

HASTINGS. You have lived very much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance. 113

MARLOW. The Englishman's malady.—But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother.—But among females of another class, you know— 123

HASTINGS. Aye, among them you are impudent enough, of all conscience.

MARLOW. They are of *us*, you know.

HASTINGS. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler. You look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room. 131

MARLOW. Why, man, that's because I *do* want to steal out of the room! Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence. 140

HASTINGS. If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the bar-maid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker— 144

MARLOW. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them; they freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me, a modest woman, dressed out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation. 151

HASTINGS. Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

MARLOW. Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question of "Madam, will you marry me?"—no, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

HASTINGS. I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

MARLOW. As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low, answer yes or no to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again. 172

HASTINGS. I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

MARLOW. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you; the family don't know you; as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honor do the rest. 181

HASTINGS. My dear Marlow!—But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent and her own inclination. 189

MARLOW. Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward, prepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's 'prentice, or one of the duchesses[1] of Drury Lane.—Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us. 198

Enter HARDCASTLE

HARDCASTLE. Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

MARLOW. (*Aside*) He has got our names from the servants already. (*To him*) We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. (*To* HASTINGS) I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine. 212

HARDCASTLE. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

HASTINGS. [*Aside*] I fancy, [Charles,] you're right; the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold. 218

HARDCASTLE. Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no constraint in this house. This is Liberty Hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

MARLOW. [*Aside*] Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat. 227

HARDCASTLE.—Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison—

MARLOW. Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown?

HARDCASTLE.—He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men— 236

HASTINGS. I think not: brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

HARDCASTLE.—I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

MARLOW. The girls like finery. 242

HARDCASTLE.—Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. "Now," says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—you must have heard of George Brooks—"I'll pawn my dukedom," says he, "but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood." So— 251

MARLOW. What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the meantime? It would help us to carry on the siege with vigor. 255

HARDCASTLE. Punch, sir! (*Aside*) This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with.

MARLOW. Yes, sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty Hall, you know.

HARDCASTLE. Here 's cup, sir. 262

MARLOW. (*Aside*) So this fellow, in his Liberty Hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

HARDCASTLE. (*Taking the cup*) I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared

[1] courtesans.

it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance. (*Drinks*)

MARLOW. (*Aside*) A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humor him a little.—Sir, my service to you. (*Drinks*)

HASTINGS. (*Aside*) I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper before he has learned to be a gentleman.

MARLOW. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose.

HARDCASTLE. No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there is no business "for us that sell ale."

HASTINGS. So! then you have no turn for politics, I find.

HARDCASTLE. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about Heyder Ally, or Ally Cawn[1] than about Ally Croaker.[2] Sir, my service to you.

HASTINGS. So that with eating above stairs and drinking below, with receiving your friends within and amusing them without, you lead a good, pleasant, bustling life of it.

HARDCASTLE. I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlor.

MARLOW. (*After drinking*) And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

HARDCASTLE. Aye, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

MARLOW. (*Aside*) Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

HASTINGS. So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. (*Drinks*)

HARDCASTLE. Good, very good! Thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade.[3] You shall hear.

MARLOW. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

HARDCASTLE. For supper, sir! (*Aside*) Was ever such a request to a man in his own house?

MARLOW. Yes, sir, supper, sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld!—(*To him*) Why, really, sir, as for supper I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

MARLOW. You do, do you?

HARDCASTLE. Entirely. By-the-bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

MARLOW. Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence I hope, sir?

HARDCASTLE. Oh, no, sir, none in the least. Yet I don't know how; our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

HASTINGS. Let's see your list of the larder then. I ask it as a favor. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

1 Indian rulers.
2 A popular Irish tune.
3 In 1717.

MARLOW. (*To* HARDCASTLE, *who looks at them with surprise*) Sir, he 's very right, and it 's my way too.

HARDCASTLE. Sir, you have a right to command here.—Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper; I believe it 's drawn out.—Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

HASTINGS. (*Aside*) All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel! we shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace.—But let's hear the bill of fare.

MARLOW. (*Perusing*) What 's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the dessert. The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down a whole Joiners' Company, or the Corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

HASTINGS. But let's hear it.

MARLOW. (*Reading*) For the first course, at the top, a pig and prune sauce.

HASTINGS. Damn your pig, I say.

MARLOW. And damn your prune sauce, say I.

HARDCASTLE. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig with prune sauce is very good eating.

MARLOW. At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

HASTINGS. Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir; I don't like them.

MARLOW. Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves; I do.

HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) Their impudence confounds me!—(*To them*) Gentlemen, you are my guests; make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

MARLOW. Item: a pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine,[1] a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream.

HASTINGS. Confound your made dishes; I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

[1] A pastry.

HARDCASTLE. I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to—

MARLOW. Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please.—So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired and properly taken care of.

HARDCASTLE. I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

MARLOW. Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me; I always look to these things myself.

HARDCASTLE. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

MARLOW. [*Starting out*] You see I'm resolved on it. (*Aside*) A very troublesome fellow this, as I ever met with.

HARDCASTLE. Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you. (*Aside*) This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence.

Exeunt MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE

HASTINGS. [*Alone*] So! I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him?—Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter MISS NEVILLE

MISS NEVILLE. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

HASTINGS. Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

MISS NEVILLE. An inn! Sure, you mistake; my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

HASTINGS. My friend Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

MISS NEVILLE. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often!—ha! ha! ha!

HASTINGS. He whom your aunt intends for you? he of whom I have such just apprehensions? 456

MISS NEVILLE. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest. 462

HASTINGS. Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

MISS NEVILLE. I have often told you that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours. 483

HASTINGS. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution. 490

MISS NEVILLE. But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we still continue to deceive him?—This, this way—

(*They confer*)

Enter MARLOW

MARLOW. The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—What have we got here? 503

HASTINGS. My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you!—The most fortunate accident!—Who do you think is just alighted?

MARLOW. Cannot guess. 507

HASTINGS. Our mistresses, boy—Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighborhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stepped into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

MARLOW. (*Aside*) I have been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

HASTINGS. Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world? 520

MARLOW. Oh, yes! Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter.—But our dresses, George, you know are in disorder—What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow—to-morrow at her own house?—It will be every bit as convenient—and rather more respectful.—To-morrow let it be. 527

(*Offering to go*)

MISS NEVILLE. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardor of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

MARLOW. Oh, the devil! how shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem! 537

HASTINGS. Pshaw, man! it 's but the first plunge, and all 's over. She 's but a woman, you know.

MARLOW. And of all women she that I dread most to encounter. 542

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *as returned from walking; a bonnet, &c.*

HASTINGS. (*Introducing them*) Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow. I'm proud of

bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

MISS HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) Now for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. (*After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted*) I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir. I'm told you had some accidents by the way. 552

MARLOW. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded.—Hem! 557

HASTINGS. (*To him*) You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

MISS HARDCASTLE. I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company, can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country. 564

MARLOW. (*Gathering courage*) I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam, but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it. 569

MISS NEVILLE. But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

HASTINGS. (*To him*) Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance forever. 574

MARLOW. (*To him*) Hem! Stand by me, then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

MISS HARDCASTLE. An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve. 581

MARLOW. Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness. 585

HASTINGS. (*To him*) Bravo, bravo! Never spoke so well in your whole life.—Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview. 591

MARLOW. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things.—(*To him*) Zounds! George, sure, you won't go? How can you leave us? 595

HASTINGS. Our presence will but spoil conversation; so we'll retire to the next room. (*To him*) You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tête-à-tête* of our own.

Exeunt [HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE]

MISS HARDCASTLE. (*After a pause*) But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir; the ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

MARLOW. (*Relapsing into timidity*) Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them. 608

MARLOW. Perhaps so, madam, but I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex.—But I'm afraid I grow tiresome. 612

MISS HARDCASTLE. Not at all, sir. There is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it forever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of *sentiment* could ever admire those light, airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

MARLOW. It 's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish—for—um—a—um. 622

MISS HARDCASTLE. I understand you, sir. There must be some who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting. 626

MARLOW. My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a—

MISS HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions? (*To him*) You were going to observe, sir— 633

MARLOW. I was observing, madam—I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

MISS HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) I vow, and so do I. (*To him*) You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir. 640

MARLOW. Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon strict inquiry do not—a—a—a—

MISS HARDCASTLE. I understand you perfectly, sir.

MARLOW. (*Aside*) Egad! and that 's more than I do myself.

MISS HARDCASTLE. You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

MARLOW. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms.—But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Not in the least, there 's something so agreeable and
in your manner, such life and for
sir, go on.

MARLOW. Yes, madam. I
that there are some occasi
want of courage, madam
and puts us—upon a—

MISS HARDCASTLE.
tirely; a want of co
sions assumes the a
and betrays us whe
I beg you'll proce

MARLOW. Yes,
madam—but I s
in the next roo
the world.

MISS HARDC
was more agr
life. Pray go

MARLOW. Y
beckons us to
myself the ho

MISS HARDC

MARLOW. (
dialogue has d

MISS HARDC
Was there ever
terview? I'm c
face the whole
his unaccounta
too. He has g
in his fears th

ignorance. If I could te
fidence, it would be doi
know of a piece of ser
somebody?—that, fait
scarce answer.

Enter TONY *and* M
MRS. HARDC

TONY. What d
Con? I wonder
very engagin

MISS N
speak
bl

. I protest, I dressed it
in the Ladies' Memo-
last year.
! Such a head in a
use would draw as
May'ress at a City
738
ow, since inocula-
thing to be seen
ust dress a little
in the crowd.
er be your
) 744
my

HASTINGS. Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume? 782

MRS. HARDCASTLE. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. (*To them*) Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance this evening? 789

TONY. I have been saying no soft things, but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that 's left to myself but the stable! 793

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Never mind him, Con, y dear. He 's in another story behind your

NEVILLE. There 's something gen-
y cousin's manner. He falls out
o be forgiven in private. 799
's a damned confounded—

. Ah! he 's a sly one.
y are like each other
Hastings?—the Blen-
They're of a size, too.
ties, that Mr. Hast-
Tony. 807
not make me, I
(*Measuring*)
he has almost
811
e monster! For
d behave so!
me have my
ade a fool of
816
ngrateful boy.
s I have taken
ve rocked you
pretty mouth
rk that waist-
Did not I pre-
weep while the
824
on to weep, for
er since I was
very receipt in
imes over, and

you have thoughts of coursing me through *Quincy* next spring. But, ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Wasn't it all for your good, viper?—Wasn't it all for your good?

TONY. I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits! If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself—not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. That 's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster!

TONY. Ecod! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart; I see he does!

HASTINGS. Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Well, I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation; was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy?

Exeunt MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILLE

TONY. (*Singing*) "There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will. Rang do didlo dee."—Don't mind her. Let her cry. It 's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

HASTINGS. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

TONY. That 's as I find 'um.

HASTINGS. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer. And yet she appears to me a pretty, well-tempered girl.

TONY. That 's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her, and there 's not a more bitter, cantankerous toad in all Christendom.

HASTINGS. (*Aside*) Pretty encouragement this for a lover!

TONY. I have seen her since the height of that. [*Holding out his arm*] She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket or a colt the first day's breaking.

HASTINGS. To me she appears sensible and silent.

TONY. Aye, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

HASTINGS. But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

TONY. Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up and you're flung in a ditch.

HASTINGS. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty—yes, you must allow her some beauty.

TONY. Bandbox! She's all a made-up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has two eyes as black as sloes and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

HASTINGS. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

TONY. Anon.

HASTINGS. Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

TONY. Aye; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

HASTINGS. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France and you shall never hear more of her.

TONY. Assist you! Ecod I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and maybe get you a part of her fortin beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

HASTINGS. My dear 'squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

TONY. Come along, then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. (*Singing*)

We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar.

Exeunt

ACT III

[*Scene continues; time, evening*]

Enter HARDCASTLE *alone*

HARDCASTLE. What could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fire-side already. He took off his boots in the parlor, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter; she will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *plainly dressed*

HARDCASTLE. Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

MISS HARDCASTLE. I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety. 18

HARDCASTLE. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my *modest* gentleman to you as a lover to-day. 22

MISS HARDCASTLE. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

HARDCASTLE. I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties! 28

MISS HARDCASTLE. I never saw anything like it—and a man of the world too!

HARDCASTLE. Aye, he learned it all abroad. What a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling! He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade. 34

MISS HARDCASTLE. It seems all natural to him.

HARDCASTLE. A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master. 38

MISS HARDCASTLE. Sure you mistake, papa! A French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look—that awkward address—that bashful manner— 42

HARDCASTLE. Whose look? whose manner, child?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Mr. Marlow's; his *mauvaise honte*,[1] his timidity, struck me at the first sight. 47

HARDCASTLE. Then your first sight deceived you, for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses. 51

MISS HARDCASTLE. Sure, sir, you rally! I never saw anyone so modest.

HARDCASTLE. And can you be serious? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him. 57

MISS HARDCASTLE. Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

HARDCASTLE. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again. 63

MISS HARDCASTLE. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow and "Madam, I would not for the world detain you." 70

HARDCASTLE. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before; asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer; interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun; and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch! 79

MISS HARDCASTLE. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

HARDCASTLE. If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent. 84

MISS HARDCASTLE. And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

HARDCASTLE. In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Yes; but upon conditions. For if you should find him less im-

[1] embarrassment.

pudent, and I more presuming—if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate —I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man. Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse-race in the country.

HARDCASTLE. If we should find him so—but that 's impossible. The first appearance has done my business; I'm seldom deceived in that.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

HARDCASTLE. Aye, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense and a genteel figure for every virtue.

MISS HARDCASTLE. I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding!

HARDCASTLE. Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both perhaps.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

HARDCASTLE. Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong. *Exeunt*

Enter TONY, *running in with a casket*

TONY. Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs[1] and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither.—O! my genus, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS

HASTINGS. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

TONY. And here's something to bear your charges by the way (*Giving the casket*)—your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

HASTINGS. But how have you procured them from your mother?

TONY. Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

HASTINGS. Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you, Miss Neville is endeavoring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

TONY. Well, keep them till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough; she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

HASTINGS. But I dread the effects of her resentment when she finds she has lost them.

TONY. Never you mind her resentment; leave *me* to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker.—Zounds! here they are. Morrice! Prance!

Exit HASTINGS

[*Enter*] MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILLE

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

MISS NEVILLE. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady Killdaylight, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town and bring nothing but paste and marcasites[2] back?

[1] pendants.

[2] Cheap mineral ornaments.

MISS NEVILLE. But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers.—What do you think, Tony, my dear? Does your cousin Con want any jewels in your eyes to set off her beauty?

TONY. That 's as thereafter may be.

MISS NEVILLE. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut[1] things! They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe, I can't readily come at them. They may be missing for aught I know to the contrary.

TONY. (*Apart to* MRS. HARDCASTLE) Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she 's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It 's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*Apart to* TONY) You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

TONY. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

MISS NEVILLE. I desire them but for a day, madam—just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them you should have them. They're missing, I assure you—lost, for aught I know. But we must have patience, wherever they are.

MISS NEVILLE. I'll not believe it! this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they are too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss—

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing and not to be found.

TONY. That I can bear witness to. They are missing and not to be found; I'll take my oath on't.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

MISS NEVILLE. Aye, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Now I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them, and in the meantime you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

MISS NEVILLE. I detest garnets.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You *shall* have them. *Exit*

MISS NEVILLE. I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever anything so provoking, to mislay my own jewels and force me to wear her trumpery?

TONY. Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark; he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

MISS NEVILLE. My dear cousin!

TONY. Vanish! She 's here, and has missed them already.

Exit MISS NEVILLE

—Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catherine wheel![2]

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Confusion! thieves! robbers! we are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone!

TONY. What 's the matter—what 's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. We are robbed! My bureau has been broken open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

[1] In broad, simple patterns.

[2] Named from the martyrdom of St. Catherine on a spiked wheel.

TONY. Oh, is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it acted better in my life! Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha! ha! ha!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Why, boy, I *am* ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broken open and all taken away.

TONY. Stick to that—ha! ha! ha! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. I tell you, Tony, by all that 's precious, the jewels are gone and I shall be ruined forever.

TONY. Sure, I know they are gone, and I'm to say so.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. My dearest Tony, but hear me! They're gone, I say.

TONY. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh—ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest! I tell you I'm not in jest, booby.

TONY. That 's right, that 's right; you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me! Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand and thieves on the other!

TONY. I can bear witness to that.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Bear witness again, you blockhead you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of *her*? Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

TONY. I can bear witness to that.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will.

TONY. I can bear witness to that.

(He runs off; she follows him)

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE *and* Maid

MISS HARDCASTLE. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn! ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

MAID. But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the bar-maid. He mistook you for the bar-maid, madam.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Did he? Then as I live, I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the *Beaux Stratagem*?

MAID. It 's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country but when she visits or receives company.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

MAID. Certain of it.

MISS HARDCASTLE. I vow, I thought so; for, though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

MAID. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

MISS HARDCASTLE. In the first place I shall be *seen*, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is, to take my gentleman off his guard and, like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

MAID. But are you sure you can act your part and disguise your voice so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant—"Did your honor call?—Attend the Lion[1] there—Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb has been outrageous this half-hour."

MAID. It will do, madam.—But he's here. *Exit* Maid

[1] Cf. p. 681, note.

Enter MARLOW

MARLOW. What a bawling in every part of the house! I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story; if I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtsey down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself—and now for recollection. (*Walks and muses*)

MISS HARDCASTLE. Did you call, sir? Did your honor call?

MARLOW. (*Musing*) As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Did your honor call? (*She still places herself before him, he turning away*)

MARLOW. No, child. (*Musing*)—Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

MISS HARDCASTLE. I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

MARLOW. No, no. (*Musing*)—I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning. (*Taking out his tablets, and perusing*)

MISS HARDCASTLE. Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir?

MARLOW. I tell you, no.

MISS HARDCASTLE. I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants!

MARLOW. No, no, I tell you. (*Looks full in her face*) Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

MISS HARDCASTLE. O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

MARLOW. Never saw a more sprightly, malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you any of your—a—what d'ye call it in the house?

MISS HARDCASTLE. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

MARLOW. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of a trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that too.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Nectar?—nectar? That's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

MARLOW. Of true English growth, I assure you.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

MARLOW. Eighteen years! Why, one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

MISS HARDCASTLE. O sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

MARLOW. To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. (*Approaching*)—Yet, nearer, I don't think so much. (*Approaching*) By coming close to some women they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed—(*Attempting to kiss her*)

MISS HARDCASTLE. Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

MARLOW. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can ever be acquainted?

MISS HARDCASTLE. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance—not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle, that was here awhile ago, in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked for all the world as if you was before a justice of peace.

MARLOW. (*Aside*) Egad, she has hit it, sure enough! (*To her*) In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha!—A mere awkward, squinting thing! No, no! I find you don't know me. I laughed and rallied her a little, but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, *curse me*!

MISS HARDCASTLE. O then, sir, you are a favorite, I find, among the ladies?

MARLOW. Yes, my dear, a great favorite.

And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the Ladies' Club in town I'm called their "agreeable Rattle." Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons—Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service.

(*Offering to salute her*)

MISS HARDCASTLE. Hold, sir; you are introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favorite there, you say?

MARLOW. Yes, my dear. There 's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Langhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Then it 's a very merry place, I suppose?

MARLOW. Yes, as merry as cards, supper, wine, and old women can make us.

MISS HARDCASTLE. And their agreeable Rattle; ha! ha! ha!

MARLOW. (*Aside*) Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. —You laugh, child?

MISS HARDCASTLE. I can't but laugh, to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

MARLOW. (*Aside*) All 's well; she don't laugh at me. (*To her*) Do you ever work, child?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Aye, sure. There 's not a screen or quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

MARLOW. Odso! then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me.

(*Seizing her hand*)

MISS HARDCASTLE. Aye, but the colors do not look well by candlelight. You shall see all in the morning. (*Struggling*)

MARLOW. And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.—Pshaw! the father here! My old luck: I never nicked seven that I did not throw ames[1] ace three times following.

Exit MARLOW

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise*

HARDCASTLE. So, madam. So, I find *this* is your *modest* lover! This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Never trust me, dear papa, but he 's still the modest man I first took him for; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

HARDCASTLE. By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid? And now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

MISS HARDCASTLE. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

HARDCASTLE. The girl would actually make one run mad!—I tell you, I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarce been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence and call it modesty, but my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

HARDCASTLE. You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

HARDCASTLE. Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open—do you mind me?

MISS HARDCASTLE. I hope, sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride, for your kindness is such that my duty as yet has been inclination. *Exeunt*

[1] I.e. ambs-ace, both aces, the lowest throw at dice.

ACT IV

[*Scene continues*]

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE

HASTINGS. You surprise me; Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night! Where have you had your information?

MISS NEVILLE. You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

HASTINGS. Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

MISS NEVILLE. The jewels, I hope, are safe?

HASTINGS. Yes, yes; I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the meantime I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the Squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses, and if I should not see him again, will write him further directions. *Exit*

MISS NEVILLE. Well, success attend you. In the meantime I'll go and amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. *Exit*

Enter MARLOW, *followed by a* Servant

MARLOW. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door?—Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

SERVANT. Yes, your honor.

MARLOW. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

SERVANT. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough. She asked me how I came by it, and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. *Exit* Servant

MARLOW. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little bar-maid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She 's mine—she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

[*Re-*]*enter* HASTINGS

HASTINGS. Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden.—Marlow here, and in spirits too!

MARLOW. Give me joy, George. Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

HASTINGS. Some women, you mean. But what success has your honor's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

MARLOW. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely little thing, that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

HASTINGS. Well, and what then?

MARLOW. She 's mine, you rogue you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips; but, egad! she would not let me kiss them, though.

HASTINGS. But are you so sure, so very sure of her?

MARLOW. Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above stairs, and I am to improve the pattern.

HASTINGS. But how can *you*, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honor?

MARLOW. Pshaw! pshaw! We all know the honor of the bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to *rob* her, take my word for it; there 's nothing in this house I shan't honestly *pay* for.

HASTINGS. I believe the girl has virtue.

MARLOW. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

HASTINGS. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? Is it in safety?

MARLOW. Yes, yes. It 's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety? Ah, numskull! I have

taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself—I have—

HASTINGS. What?

MARLOW. I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

HASTINGS. —To the landlady!

MARLOW. The landlady.

HASTINGS. You did?

MARLOW. I did. She 's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

HASTINGS. Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

MARLOW. Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion.

HASTINGS. (*Aside*) He must not see my uneasiness.

MARLOW. You seem a little disconcerted, though, methinks. Sure, nothing has happened?

HASTINGS. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who no doubt very readily undertook the charge.

MARLOW. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but through her great precaution was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

HASTINGS. He! he! he! They're safe, however?

MARLOW. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

HASTINGS. (*Aside*) So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. (*To him*) Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid, and—he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me! *Exit*

MARLOW. Thank ye, George; I ask no more.—Ha! ha! ha!

Enter HARDCASTLE

HARDCASTLE. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. (*To him*) Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. (*Bowing low*)

MARLOW. Sir, your humble servant. (*Aside*) What 's to be the wonder now?

HARDCASTLE. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so?

MARLOW. I do, from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

HARDCASTLE. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But tho' I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

MARLOW. I protest, my very good sir, that is no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, *they* are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar. I did, I assure you.—(*To the side scene*) Here, let one of my servants come up!—(*To him*) My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

HARDCASTLE. Then they had your orders for what they do? I'm satisfied!

MARLOW. They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter Servant, *drunk*

MARLOW. You, Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) I begin to lose my patience.

JEREMY. Please, your honor, liberty and Fleet Street forever! Tho' I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, dammy! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon—hiccup—upon my conscience, sir.

MARLOW. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

HARDCASTLE. [*Aside*] Zounds! he'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer! —Mr. Marlow!—Sir, I have submitted to

your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

MARLOW. Leave your house!—Sure you jest, my good friend! What, when I'm doing what I can to please you?

HARDCASTLE. I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

MARLOW. Sure, you cannot be serious! at this time o' night, and such a night? You only mean to banter me.

HARDCASTLE. I tell you, sir, I'm serious! and now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

MARLOW. Ha! ha! ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. (*In a serious tone*) This your house, fellow! It 's my house. This is my house—mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me!—never in my whole life before.

HARDCASTLE. Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, "This house is mine, sir!" By all that 's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir (*Bantering*), as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There 's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there 's a fire-screen, and here 's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows; perhaps you may take a fancy to them?

MARLOW. Bring me your bill, sir; bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

HARDCASTLE. There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the *Rake's Progress*,[1] for your own apartment?

MARLOW. Bring me your bill, I say, and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

HARDCASTLE. Then there 's a mahogany table that you may see your own face in.

MARLOW. My bill, I say!

HARDCASTLE. I had forgot the great chair for your own particular slumbers after a hearty meal.

MARLOW. Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

HARDCASTLE. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me I was taught to expect a well-bred, modest man as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. *Exit*

MARLOW. How 's this? Sure I have not mistaken the house! Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry, "Coming!" the attendance is awkward; the bar-maid, too, to attend us.—But she 's here, and will further inform me.—Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE

MISS HARDCASTLE. Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry. (*Aside*) I believe he begins to find out his mistake, but it 's too soon quite to undeceive him.

MARLOW. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

MISS HARDCASTLE. A relation of the family, sir.

MARLOW. What, a poor relation?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Yes, sir; a poor relation, appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

MARLOW. That is, you act as the bar-maid of this inn.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Inn! Oh, law—what brought that in your head? One of the best families in the country keep an inn!—Ha! ha! ha! old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

MARLOW. Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Aye, sure! Whose else should it be?

MARLOW. So then, all 's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. Oh, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura in all the print-shops. The *Dullissimo*

[1] A series by Hogarth.

Maccaroni. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an innkeeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! What a silly puppy do I find myself! There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there 's nothing in my *behavior* to put me on a level with one of that stamp.

MARLOW. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over; this house I no more show *my* face in. 293

MISS HARDCASTLE. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry (*Pretending to cry*) if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character. 302

MARLOW. (*Aside*) By Heaven! she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. (*To her*) Excuse me, my lovely girl; you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, makes an honorable connection impossible; and I can never harbor a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honor, of bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely. 314

MISS HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) Generous man! I now begin to admire him. (*To him*) But I am sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's; and though I'm poor, that 's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want a fortune. 321

MARLOW. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Because it puts me at a distance from one that, if I had a thousand pounds, I would give it all to. 326

MARLOW. (*Aside*) This simplicity bewitches me so, that if I stay, I'm undone. I must make one bold effort and leave her. (*To her*) Your partiality in my favor, my dear, touches me most sensibly, and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father; so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me. Farewell. *Exit* 336

MISS HARDCASTLE. I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but will undeceive my papa, who perhaps may laugh him out of his resolution. *Exit*

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE

TONY. Aye, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that 's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants. 347

MISS NEVILLE. But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress? If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

TONY. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistle-jacket; and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face.—Here she comes; we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us. (*They retire and seem to fondle*)

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? fondling together, as I'm alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. —Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves? What, billing, exchanging stolen glances and broken murmurs? Ah! 369

TONY. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there 's no love lost between us.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

MISS NEVILLE. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

TONY. Oh, it 's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

MISS NEVILLE. Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humor, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless (*Patting his cheek*)—ah! it 's a bold face.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Pretty innocence!

TONY. I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that over the haspicholls like a parcel of bobbins.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Ah! he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly.—The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY

DIGGORY. Where's the 'squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

TONY. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

DIGGORY. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

TONY. Who does it come from?

DIGGORY. Your worship mun ask that o' the letter itself.

TONY. I could wish to know tho'.

(*Turning the letter and gazing on it*)

MISS NEVILLE. (*Aside*) Undone! undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined forever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. (*To* MRS. HARDCASTLE) But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed!—You must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us.

(*They confer*)

TONY. (*Still gazing*) A damned cramp piece of penmanship as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print hand very well; but here are such handles and shanks and dashes that one can scarce tell the head from the tail.—"To Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire." It 's very odd; I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough, but when I come to open it, it 's all—buzz! That 's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher?

MISS NEVILLE. Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

TONY. (*Still gazing*) A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor.—(*Reading*) "Dear Sir,"—aye, that's that. Then there's an *M*, and a *T*, and an *S*, but whether the next be an *izzard*, or an *R*, confound me, I cannot tell.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

MISS NEVILLE. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. (*Twitching the letter from him*) Do you know who it is from?

TONY. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

MISS NEVILLE. Aye, so it is. (*Pretending to read*) Dear 'Squire, hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um—here, here, it's all

about cocks and fighting; it's of no consequence. Here, put it up, put it up!

(*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him*)

TONY. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence!

(*Giving* MRS. HARDCASTLE *the letter*)

MRS. HARDCASTLE. How's this?—(*Reads*) "Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the *hag* (aye, the hag), your mother, will otherwise suspect us! Yours, Hastings."—Grant me patience. I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me!

MISS NEVILLE. I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence or sinister design that belongs to another.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*Curtseying very low*) Fine spoken, madam; you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. (*Changing her tone*) And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut—were you too joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment.—As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare this very moment to run off with *me*. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me.—You too, sir, may mount your horse and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves. *Exit*

MISS NEVILLE. So now I'm completely ruined!

TONY. Aye, that's a sure thing.

MISS NEVILLE. What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool—and after all the nods and signs I made him!

TONY. By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS

HASTINGS. So, sir, I find by my servant that you have shown my letter and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

TONY. Here's another. Ask miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW

MARLOW. So I have been finely used here among you!—rendered contemptible, driven into ill manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

TONY. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

MISS NEVILLE. And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

MARLOW. What can I say to him—a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection?

HASTINGS. A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

MISS NEVILLE. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

HASTINGS. An insensible cub.

MARLOW. Replete with tricks and mischief.

TONY. Baw! damme, but I'll fight you both, one after the other—with baskets.[1]

MARLOW. As for him, he's below resentment.—But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

HASTINGS. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

MARLOW. But, sir—

MISS NEVILLE. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

1 protected.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. *Exit* Servant 558

MISS NEVILLE. Well, well; I'll come presently.

MARLOW. (*To* HASTINGS) Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous? to hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation. 565

HASTINGS. Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I entrusted to yourself to the care of another, sir? 569

MISS NEVILLE. Mr. Hastings! Mr. Marlow! Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute? I implore, I entreat you—

Enter SERVANT

SERVANT. Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient. *Exit* Servant

MISS NEVILLE. I come. Pray be pacified; if I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting. 580

MISS NEVILLE. O Mr. Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity. 584

MARLOW. I'm so distracted with a variety of passions that I don't know what I do.—Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it. 589

HASTINGS. The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

MISS NEVILLE. Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure, you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connection. If— 596

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*Within*) Miss Neville! Constance—why Constance, I say!

MISS NEVILLE. I'm coming. Well, constancy; remember, constancy is the word.

Exit

HASTINGS. My heart! how can I support this? To be so near happiness, and such happiness! 603

MARLOW. (*To* TONY) You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you is here disappointment, and even distress. 607

TONY. (*From a reverie*) Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands! Yours and yours, my poor Sulky!—My boots there, ho!—Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse and Bet Bouncer into the bargain.—Come along. My boots, ho!

Exeunt

ACT V

[SCENE I.] *Scene continues*

Enter HASTINGS *and* Servant

HASTINGS. You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

SERVANT. Yes, your honor. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time. 6

HASTINGS. Then all my hopes are over.

SERVANT. Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles has arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half hour. They are coming this way. 12

HASTINGS. Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time.

Exeunt

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE

HARDCASTLE. Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands! 18

SIR CHARLES. And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

HARDCASTLE. And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too. 23

SIR CHARLES. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha! ha! ha!

HARDCASTLE. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small—

SIR CHARLES. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to *me*? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other as you say they do— 37

HARDCASTLE. *If*, man! I tell you they *do* like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

SIR CHARLES. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know. 42

HARDCASTLE. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs*, I warrant him. 46

Enter MARLOW

MARLOW. I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

HARDCASTLE. Tut, boy, a trifle! You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it. 53

MARLOW. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

HARDCASTLE. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me? 59

MARLOW. Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

HARDCASTLE. Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but mum. 65

MARLOW. Sure, sir, nothing has passed between us but the most profound respect on my side and the most distant reserve on hers. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family! 71

HARDCASTLE. Impudence! No, I don't say that—not quite impudence—though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you. 76

MARLOW. I never gave her the slightest cause.

HARDCASTLE. Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You may be open. Your father and I will like you all the better for it. 83

MARLOW. May I die, sir, if I ever—

HARDCASTLE. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her—

MARLOW. Dear sir—I protest, sir—

HARDCASTLE. I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you. 90

MARLOW. But hear me, sir—

HARDCASTLE. Your father approves the match, I admire it; every moment's delay will be doing mischief. So— 94

MARLOW. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slighest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting. 101

HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) This fellow's formal, modest impudence is beyond bearing.

SIR CHARLES. And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations? 105

MARLOW. As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. *Exit* 112

SIR CHARLES. I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

HARDCASTLE. And I am astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

SIR CHARLES. I dare pledge my life and honor upon his truth.

HARDCASTLE. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE

HARDCASTLE. Kate! come hither, child. Answer us sincerely and without reserve; has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

MISS HARDCASTLE. The question is very abrupt, sir. But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

HARDCASTLE. (*To* SIR CHARLES) You see.

SIR CHARLES. And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Yes, several.

HARDCASTLE. (*To* SIR CHARLES) You see.

SIR CHARLES. But did he profess any attachment?

MISS HARDCASTLE. A lasting one.

SIR CHARLES. Did he talk of love?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Much, sir.

SIR CHARLES. Amazing! And all this formally?

MISS HARDCASTLE. Formally.

HARDCASTLE. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

SIR CHARLES. And how did he behave, madam?

MISS HARDCASTLE. As most professed admirers do—said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit and the greatness of mine, mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

SIR CHARLES. Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him, and I am confident he never sat for the picture.

MISS HARDCASTLE. Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

SIR CHARLES. Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. *Exit*

MISS HARDCASTLE. And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning. *Exeunt*

[SCENE II.] *The back of the garden*

Enter HASTINGS

HASTINGS. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me! He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer.—What do I see? It is he! and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered*

HASTINGS. My honest 'squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

TONY. Aye, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world if you knew but all. This riding by night, by the bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

HASTINGS. But how? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

TONY. Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it. Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox than ten with such varment!

HASTINGS. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

TONY. Left them! Why, where should I leave them but where I found them?

HASTINGS. This is a riddle.

TONY. Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house and round the house, and never touches the house?

HASTINGS. I'm still astray.

TONY. Why, that's it, mon—I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond

or a slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

HASTINGS. Ha! ha! ha! I understand! you took them in a round while they supposed themselves going forward, and so you have at last brought them home again.

TONY. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree Heath; and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

HASTINGS. But no accident, I hope?

TONY. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

HASTINGS. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

TONY. Aye, now it's "dear friend," noble 'squire. Just now, it was all "idiot," "cub," and "run me through the guts." Damn *your* way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead and you might go kiss the hangman.

HASTINGS. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one. *Exit* HASTINGS

TONY. Never fear me.—Here she comes. Vanish! She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Oh, Tony, I'm killed! Shook! Battered to death! I shall never survive it. That last jolt, that laid us against the quickset hedge, has done my business.

TONY. Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

TONY. By my guess we should be upon Crackskull common, about forty miles from home.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. O lud! O lud! The most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

TONY. Don't be afraid, mamma—don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid.—Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree.—Don't be afraid.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. The fright will certainly kill me.

TONY. Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Oh, death!

TONY. No; it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma; don't be afraid.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

TONY. (*Aside*) Father-in-law, by all that 's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. (*To her*) Ah, it's a highwayman with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Good Heaven defend us! He approaches.

TONY. Do you hide yourself in that thicket and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough, be sure to keep close.

(MRS. HARDCASTLE *hides behind a tree in the back scene*)

Enter HARDCASTLE

HARDCASTLE. I'm mistaken or I heard voices of people in want of help.—Oh, Tony! is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

TONY. Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's.—Hem!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*From behind*) Ah, death! I find there's danger.

HARDCASTLE. Forty miles in three hours? sure, that's too much, my youngster.

TONY. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say.—Hem!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*From behind*) Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm!

HARDCASTLE. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

TONY. It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going.—Hem! As to be sure it was.—Hem! I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please.—Hem!

HARDCASTLE. But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved (*Raising his voice*) to find the other out.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*From behind*) Oh, he's coming to find me out. Oh!

TONY. What need you go, sir, if I tell you? —Hem! I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem!—I'll tell you all, sir.

(*Detaining him*)

HARDCASTLE. I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*Running forward from behind*) O lud! he'll murder my poor boy, my darling! Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman; spare my child, if you have any mercy.

HARDCASTLE. My wife, as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come? or what does she mean?

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*Kneeling*) Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives! We will never bring you to justice; indeed we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

HARDCASTLE. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know *me*?

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me.—But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

HARDCASTLE. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door!—(*To him*) This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you. (*To her*) Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree? and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. (*To* TONY) And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

TONY. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. I'll spoil you, I will!

(*Follows him off the stage.* [*Exeunt*])

HARDCASTLE. There's morality, however, in his reply. *Exit*

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE

HASTINGS. My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost forever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

MISS NEVILLE. I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

HASTINGS. Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune! Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail!

MISS NEVILLE. No, Mr. Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

HASTINGS. But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

MISS NEVILLE. But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

HASTINGS. I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. 224

Exeunt

[SCENE III. *The living room of* HARDCASTLE'S *house*]

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* MISS HARDCASTLE

SIR CHARLES. What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter. 5

MISS HARDCASTLE. I am proud of your approbation, and to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes. 9

SIR CHARLES. I'll to your father and keep him to the appointment. *Exit* SIR CHARLES

Enter MARLOW

MARLOW. Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I till this moment know the pain I feel in the separation. 15

MISS HARDCASTLE. (*In her own natural manner*) I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

MARLOW. (*Aside*) This girl every moment improves upon me. (*To her*) It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution. 29

MISS HARDCASTLE. Then go, sir; I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune. 39

Enter HARDCASTLE *and* SIR CHARLES *from behind*

SIR CHARLES. Here, behind this screen.

HARDCASTLE. Aye, aye; make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last. 43

MARLOW. By heavens, madam! fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye, for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence and conscious virtue. 54

SIR CHARLES. What can it mean? He amazes me!

HARDCASTLE. I told you how it would be. Hush! 58

MARLOW. I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation. 62

MISS HARDCASTLE. No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot, detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connection in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness which was acquired by lessening yours? 71

MARLOW. By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me! Nor shall I ever feel repentance but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay even contrary to your wishes; and tho' you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct. 79

MISS HARDCASTLE. Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end—in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity; but seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connection where *I* must appear mercenary, and *you* imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer? 88

MARLOW. (*Kneeling*) Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue—

SIR CHARLES. I can hold it no longer. [*Rushing forth*] Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation? 97

HARDCASTLE. [*Following*] Your cold contempt, your formal interview! What have you to say now?

MARLOW. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean? 102

HARDCASTLE. It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure; that you can address a lady in private and deny it in public; that you have one story for us and another for my daughter. 107

MARLOW. Daughter!—This lady your daughter?

HARDCASTLE. Yes, sir, my only daughter—my Kate. Whose else should she be?

MARLOW. Oh, the devil! 112

MISS HARDCASTLE. Yes, sir, that very identical, tall, squinting lady you were pleased to take me for (*Curtseying*)—she that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the Ladies' Club. Ha! ha! ha!

MARLOW. Zounds! there's no bearing this; it's worse than death! 120

MISS HARDCASTLE. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you—as the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard and hates hypocrisy, or the loud, confident creature that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap and old Miss Biddy Buckskin till three in the morning? Ha! ha! ha! 128

MARLOW. Oh, curse on my noisy head. I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

HARDCASTLE. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man. 137

(*They retire, she tormenting him, to the back scene*)

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* TONY

MRS. HARDCASTLE. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go; I care not.

HARDCASTLE. Who gone?

MRS. HARDCASTLE. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town—he who came down with our modest visitor here. 144

SIR CHARLES. Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice. 148

HARDCASTLE. Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connection.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune; that remains in this family to console us for her loss. 154

HARDCASTLE. Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Aye, that's my affair, not yours. 158

HARDCASTLE. But you know if your son, when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Aye, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal. 164

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE

MRS. HARDCASTLE. (*Aside*) What, returned so soon! I begin not to like it.

HASTINGS. (*To* HARDCASTLE) For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's con-

sent I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

MISS NEVILLE. Since his death I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity I was ready to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I am now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connection.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. Pshaw, pshaw! this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

HARDCASTLE. Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due.—Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

TONY. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

HARDCASTLE. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

TONY. Of age! Am I of age, father?

HARDCASTLE. Above three months.

TONY. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (*Taking* MISS NEVILLE'S *hand*) Witness all men by these presents that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of BLANK place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

SIR CHARLES. O brave 'squire!

HASTINGS. My worthy friend!

MRS. HARDCASTLE. My undutiful offspring!

MARLOW. Joy, my dear George! I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive if you would return me the favor.

HASTINGS. (*To* MISS HARDCASTLE) Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

HARDCASTLE. (*Joining their hands*) And I say so too. And, Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper! To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the Mistakes of the Night shall be crowned with a merry morning. So, boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is that you may never be mistaken in the wife. *Exeunt Omnes*

EPILOGUE

Well, having Stooped to Conquer with success,
And gained a husband without aid from dress,
Still as a bar-maid, I could wish it too,
As I have conquered him to conquer you;
And let me say, for all your resolution,
That pretty bar-maids have done execution.
Our life is all a play, composed to please;
"We have our exits and our entrances."
The first act shows the simple country maid,
Harmless and young, of everything afraid;
Blushes when hired, and with unmeaning action,
"I hopes as how to give you satisfaction."
Her second act displays a livelier scene,—
The unblushing bar-maid of a country inn,
Who whisks about the house, at market caters,
Talks loud, coquets the guests, and scolds the waiters.
Next the scene shifts to town, and there she soars,
The chop-house toast of ogling connoisseurs.
On squires and cits she there displays her arts,
And on the gridiron broils her lovers' hearts—
And as she smiles, her triumphs to complete,
Even Common Councilmen forget to eat.
The fourth act shows her wedded to the Squire,
And madam now begins to hold it higher;
Pretends to taste, at opera cries "*Caro!*"
And quits her *Nancy Dawson*[1] for *Che faro*,[2]

1 A popular song.
2 An aria in Gluck's *Orfeo* (1764).

Dotes upon dancing, and in all her pride
Swims round the room, the Heinel[1] of Cheapside;
Ogles and leers with artificial skill,
Till having lost in age the power to kill,
She sits all night at cards and ogles at spadille.
Such, through our lives, the eventful history.
The fifth and last act still remains for me;
The bar-maid now for your protection prays,
Turns female barrister, and pleads for Bayes.[2]

EPILOGUE[3]

To be Spoken in the Character of Tony Lumpkin

By J. Craddock, Esq.

Well—now all's ended, and my comrades gone,
Pray, what becomes of mother's "nonly son"?
A hopeful blade, in town I'll fix my station
And try to make a bluster in the nation.
As for my cousin Neville, I renounce her;
Off—in a crack—I'll carry Big Bet Bouncer.
Why should I not in the great world appear?
I soon shall have a thousand pounds a year.
No matter what a man may here inherit,
In London, gad, they've some regard to spirit.
I see the horses prancing up the streets,
And big Bet Bouncer bobs to all she meets,
Then hikes to jigs and pastimes ev'ry night—
Not to the play; they say it a'n't polite;
To Sadler's Wells, perhaps, or operas go,
And once, by chance, to the roratorio.
Thus here and there, forever up and down,
We'll set the fashion, too, to half the town;
And then, at auctions—money ne'er regard;
Buy pictures like the great—ten pounds a yard.
Zounds! we shall make these London gentry say,
We know what's damned genteel as well as they.

1 A Prussian dancer then in London.
2 I. e. the dramatist.
3 This came too late to be spoken.

THE RIVALS

A Comedy by Richard Brinsley Sheridan

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

As originally acted at Covent Garden Theatre in 1775

Men

Sir Anthony Absolute
Captain Absolute
Faulkland
Acres
Sir Lucius O'Trigger
Fag
David
[Thomas, a] Coachman

Women

Mrs. Malaprop
Lydia Languish
Julia
Lucy

Maid, Boy, Servants, etc.

Scene: *Bath*

Time of Action: *Five hours* [*Contemporary*]

PREFACE

A preface to a play seems generally to be considered as a kind of closet-prologue, in which—if his piece has been successful—the author solicits that indulgence from the reader which he had before experienced from the audience. But as the scope and immediate object of a play is to please a mixed assembly in representation (whose judgment in the theatre at least is decisive), its degree of reputation is usually as determined [by the][1] public before it can be prepared for the cooler tribunal of the study. Thus any farther solicitude on the part of the writer becomes unnecessary at least, if not an intrusion; and if the piece has been condemned in the performance, I fear an address to the closet, like an appeal to posterity, is constantly regarded as the procrastination of a suit from a consciousness of the weakness of the cause. From these considerations, the following comedy would certainly have been submitted to the reader without any further introduction than what it had in the representation, but that its success has probably been founded on a circumstance which the author is informed has not before attended a theatrical trial, and which consequently ought not to pass unnoticed.

I need scarcely add that the circumstance alluded to was the withdrawing of the piece, to remove those imperfections in the first representation which were too obvious to escape reprehension and too numerous to admit of a hasty correction. There are few writers, I believe, who, even in the fullest consciousness of error, do not wish to palliate the faults which they acknowledge; and, however trifling the performance, to second their confession of its deficiencies by whatever plea seems least disgraceful to their ability. In the present instance, it cannot be said to amount either to candor or modesty in me, to acknowledge an extreme inexperience and want of judgment on matters in which, without guidance from practice or spur from success, a young man should scarcely boast of being an adept. If it be said that under such disadvantages no one should attempt to write a play, I must beg leave to dissent from the position, while the first point of experience that I have gained on the subject is a knowledge of the candor and judgment with which an impartial public distinguishes between the errors of inexperience and incapacity, and the indulgence which it shows even to a disposition to remedy the defects of either.

It were unnecessary to enter into any farther extenuation of what was thought exceptionable in this play, but that it has been said that the managers should have prevented some of the defects before its appearance to the public—and in particular the uncommon length of the piece as represented the first night. It were an ill

[1] Qr *as*.

return for the most liberal and gentlemanly conduct on their side, to suffer any censure to rest where none was deserved. Hurry in writing has long been exploded as an excuse for an author; however, in the dramatic line, it may happen that both an author and a manager may wish to fill a chasm in the entertainment of the public with a hastiness not altogether culpable. The season was advanced when I first put the play into Mr. Harris's hands: it was at that time at least double the length of any acting comedy. I profited by his judgment and experience in the curtailing of it—till, I believe, his feeling for the vanity of a young author got the better of his desire for correctness, and he left many excrescences remaining because he had assisted in pruning so many more. Hence, though I was not uninformed that the acts were still too long, I flattered myself that, after the first trial, I might with safer judgment proceed to remove what should appear to have been most dissatisfactory. Many other errors there were which might in part have arisen from my being by no means conversant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theatre. Yet I own that, in one respect, I did not regret my ignorance; for as my first wish in attempting a play was to avoid every appearance of plagiary, I thought I should stand a better chance of effecting this from being in a walk which I had not frequented, and where consequently the progress of invention was less likely to be interrupted by starts of recollection. For on subjects on which the mind has been much informed, invention is slow of exerting itself. Faded ideas float in the fancy like half-forgotten dreams, and the imagination in its fullest enjoyments becomes suspicious of its offspring and doubts whether it has created or adopted.

With regard to some particular passages which on the first night's representation seemed generally disliked, I confess that if I felt any emotion of surprise at the disapprobation, it was not that they were disapproved of, but that I had not before perceived that they deserved it. As some part of the attack on the piece was begun too early to pass for the sentence of *judgment*, which is ever tardy in condemning, it has been suggested to me that much of the disapprobation must have arisen from virulence of malice rather than severity of criticism; but as I was more apprehensive of there being just grounds to excite the latter than conscious of having deserved the former, I continue not to believe that probable which I am sure must have been unprovoked. However, if it was so and I could even mark the quarter from whence it came, it would be ungenerous to retort; for no passion suffers more than malice from disappointment. For my own part, I see no reason why the author of a play should not regard a first night's audience as a candid and judicious friend attending, in behalf of the public, at his last rehearsal. If he can dispense with flattery, he is sure at least of sincerity, and even though the annotation be rude, he may rely upon the justness of the comment. Considered in this light, that audience, whose *fiat* is essential to the poet's claim whether his object be fame or profit, has surely a right to expect some deference to its opinion, from principles of politeness at least, if not from gratitude.

As for the puny critics, who scatter their peevish strictures in private circles, and scribble at every author who has the eminence of being unconnected with them, as they are usually spleen-swoln from a vain idea of increasing their consequence, there will always be found a petulance and illiberality in their remarks which should place them as far beneath the notice of a gentleman as their original dulness had sunk them from the level of the most unsuccessful author.

It is not without pleasure that I catch at an opportunity of justifying myself from the charge of intending any national reflection in the character of Sir Lucius O'Trigger. If any gentlemen opposed the piece from that idea, I thank them sincerely for their opposition; and if the condemnation of this comedy (however misconceived the provocation) could have added one spark to the decaying flame of national attachment to the country supposed to be reflected on, I should have been happy in its fate and might with truth have boasted that it had done more real service in its failure than the successful morality of a thousand stage-novels will ever effect.

It is usual, I believe, to thank the performers in a new play for the exertion of their several abilities. But where (as in this instance) their merit has been so striking and uncontroverted as to call for the warmest and truest applause from a number of judicious audiences, the poet's after-praise comes like the feeble acclamation of a child to close the shouts of a multitude. The conduct, however, of the principals in a theatre cannot be so apparent to the public.

—I think it therefore but justice to declare that from this theatre (the only one I can speak of from experience) those writers who wish to try the dramatic line will meet with that candor and liberal attention which are generally allowed to be better calculated to lead genius into excellence than either the precepts of judgment or the guidance of experience.

THE AUTHOR

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODWARD AND MR. QUICK

Enter Sergeant-at-Law, *and* Attorney [*holding out a paper*]

SERGEANT. What's here!—a vile cramp hand! I cannot see
Without my spectacles.
ATTORNEY. He means his fee.
Nay, Mr. Sergeant, good sir, try again.
(*Gives money*)
SERGEANT. The scrawl improves! ([*Gives*] *more*) Oh, come, 'tis pretty plain.
How's this? The Poet's Brief *again*. O ho!
Cast, I suppose?
ATTORNEY. O pardon me—No—No—
We found the court, o'erlooking stricter laws,
Indulgent to the merits of the Cause;
By Judges mild, unused to harsh denial,
A rule was granted for another trial.
SERGEANT. Then heark'ee, Dibble, did you mend your pleadings,
Errors, no few, we've found in our proceedings.
ATTORNEY. Come, courage, sir, we did amend our plea,
Hence your new brief, and this refreshing fee.
Some sons of Phœbus in the courts we meet,
SERGEANT. And fifty sons of Phœbus[1] in the Fleet![2]
ATTORNEY. Nor pleads he worse, who with a decent sprig
Of bays adorns his legal waste of wig.
SERGEANT. Full-bottomed heroes thus, on signs, unfurl
A leaf of laurel in a grove of curl!
Yet tell your client that, in adverse days,
This wig is warmer than a bush of bays.
ATTORNEY. Do you, then, sir, my client's place supply,
Profuse of robe and prodigal of tie—
Do you, with all those blushing powers of face,
And wonted bashful hesitating grace,
Rise in the court and flourish on the case.

Exit

SERGEANT. For practice then suppose—this brief will show it,—
[Me,][3] Sergeant Woodward,—council for the poet.
Used to the ground—I know 'tis hard to deal
With this dread court, from whence there's no appeal;
No tricking here, to blunt the edge of law,
Or, damned in equity, escape by flaw:
But judgment given—your sentence must remain;
No writ of error lies—to Drury Lane!
Yet when so kind you seem—'tis past dispute
We gain some favor if not costs of suit.
No spleen is here! I see no hoarded fury—
I think I never faced a milder jury!
Sad else our plight! where frowns are transportation,
A hiss the gallows, and a groan—damnation!
But such the public candor, without fear
My client waives all right of challenge here.
No newsman from *our* session is dismissed,
Nor wit nor critic *we* scratch off the list;
His faults can never hurt another's ease,
His crime at worst—a bad attempt to please:
Thus, all respecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will stand or fall.

ACT I

SCENE I. *A street in Bath*

Coachman *crosses the stage; enter* FAG, *looking after him*

FAG. What! Thomas! sure 'tis he?—
What! Thomas! Thomas!

1 I. e. poets. 2 Debtor's prison. 3 Added in Q2.

COACHMAN. Hey!—Odds life! Mr. Fag!—give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

FAG. Excuse my glove, Thomas.—I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad. Why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath!

COACHMAN. Sure, Master, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postilion be all come.

FAG. Indeed!

COACHMAN. Aye, Master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit; so he'd a mind to gi't the slip, and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

FAG. Aye, aye, hasty in everything or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute!

COACHMAN. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young Master? Odd! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

FAG. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

COACHMAN. Why, sure!

FAG. At present I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

COACHMAN. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

FAG. I have not changed, Thomas.

COACHMAN. No! Why, didn't you say you had left young Master?

FAG. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no farther:—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

COACHMAN. The devil they are!

FAG. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the *ensign* half of my master being on guard at present—the *captain* has nothing to do with me.

COACHMAN. So, so!—What, this is some freak, I warrant!—Do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning o't—you know I ha' trusted you.

FAG. You'll be secret, Thomas?

COACHMAN. As a coach-horse.

FAG. Why, then, the cause of all this is—Love,—Love, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

COACHMAN. Aye, aye;—I guessed there was a lady in the case.—But pray, why does your Master pass only for ensign?—now if he had shammed general indeed—

FAG. Ah! Thomas, there lies the mystery o' the matter. Hark'ee, Thomas, my Master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste: a lady who likes him better as a half-pay ensign than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet with three thousand a year.

COACHMAN. That is an odd taste indeed!—But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? Is she rich, hey?

FAG. Rich!—Why, I believe she owns half the stocks! Z—ds! Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easy as I could my washerwoman! She has a lapdog that eats out of gold,—she feeds her parrot with small pearls,—and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

COACHMAN. Bravo! faith!—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least;—but does she draw kindly with the captain?

FAG. As fond as pigeons.

COACHMAN. May one hear her name?

FAG. Miss Lydia Languish.—But there is an old tough aunt in the way—though, by-the-by, she has never seen my Master—for he got acquainted with Miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

COACHMAN. Well—I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony.—But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath?—I ha' heard a deal of it—here's a mort[1] o' merry-making, hey?

FAG. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge. Though at present we are, like other great assemblies, divided into parties—High-roomians and Low-roomians; however, for my part, I have resolved to stand neuter, and so I told Bob Brush at our last committee.

COACHMAN. But what do the folks do here?

FAG. Oh! there are little amusements enough; in the morning we go to the pump-room (though neither my Master nor I drink the waters); after breakfast we saunter on the parades or play a game at billiards; at

[1] great deal.

night we dance. But d—n the place, I'm tired of it; their regular hours stupefy me—not a fiddle nor a card after eleven!—However, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties. I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much.

COACHMAN. Sure I know Mr. Du-Peigne—you know his Master is to marry Madam Julia.

FAG. I had forgot.—But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must.—Here now—this wig! What the devil do you do with a *wig*, Thomas?—None of the London whips of any degree of ton[1] wear wigs now.

COACHMAN. More's the pity! more's the pity, I say.—Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next.—Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the Bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the Box!—but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag; and look'ee, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

FAG. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

COACHMAN. Why, bless you, the gentlemen of they professions ben't all of a mind—for in our village now tho'ff Jack Gauge, the exciseman, has ta'en to his carrots,[2] there's little Dick the farrier swears he'll never forsake his bob,[3] tho' all the college should appear with their own heads!

FAG. Indeed! well said, Dick!—But hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

COACHMAN. Zooks! 'tis the captain.—Is that the lady with him?

FAG. No! no! that is Madam Lucy, my Master's mistress's maid. They lodge at that house—but I must after him to tell him the news.

COACHMAN. Odd! he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag—

FAG. Good-bye, Thomas. I have an appointment in Gydes' Porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. *Exeunt severally*

1 fashion. 2 Natural red hair. 3 wig.

SCENE II. *A dressing-room in* MRS. MALAPROP'S *lodgings*

LYDIA *sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand.* LUCY, *as just returned from a message*

LUCY. Indeed, ma'am, I transferred half the town in search of it! I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

LYDIA. And could not you get *The Reward of Constancy*?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am.

LYDIA. Nor *The Fatal Connection*?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am.

LYDIA. Nor *The Mistakes of the Heart*?

LUCY. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

LYDIA. Heigh-ho! Did you inquire for *The Delicate Distress*?

LUCY. Or, *The Memoirs of Lady Woodford*? Yes, indeed, ma'am. I asked everywhere for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a christian to read.

LYDIA. Heigh-ho! Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me. She has a most observing thumb and I believe cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes.—Well, child, what *have* you brought me?

LUCY. Oh! here, ma'am.—(*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets*) This is *The Gordian Knot*,— and this *Peregrine Pickle*. Here are *The Tears of Sensibility* and *Humphry Clinker*. This is *The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herself*, and here the second volume of *The Sentimental Journey*.

LYDIA. Heigh-ho!—What are those books by the glass?

LUCY. The great one is only *The Whole Duty of Man*, where I press a few blonds, ma'am.

LYDIA. Very well—give me the *sal volatile*.

LUCY. Is it in a blue cover, ma'am?

LYDIA. My smelling-bottle, you simpleton!

LUCY. Oh, the drops!—here, ma'am.

LYDIA. No note, Lucy?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am—but I have seen a certain person—

LYDIA. What, my Beverley!—Well, Lucy?

LUCY. O ma'am, he looks so desponding and melancholic!

LYDIA. Hold! Lucy—here's someone coming—quick! see who it is. *Exit* LUCY —Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice.

Re-enter LUCY

LUCY. Lud! ma'am, here is Miss Melville.

LYDIA. Is it possible!—

Enter JULIA

My dearest Julia, how delighted am I! —(*Embrace*) How unexpected was this happiness!

JULIA. True, Lydia—and our pleasure is the greater.—But what has been the matter? —you were denied to me at first!

LYDIA. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you!—But first inform me what has conjured you to Bath—is Sir Anthony here?

JULIA. He is—we are arrived within this hour—and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

LYDIA. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress! I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, tho' your prudence may condemn me! My letters have informed you of my whole connection with Beverley, but I have lost him, Julia! My aunt has discovered our intercourse by a note she intercepted and has confined me ever since! Yet, would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

JULIA. You jest, Lydia!

LYDIA. No, upon my word.—She absolutely carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him;—but it is a *Delia* or a *Celia*, I assure you.

JULIA. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece.

LYDIA. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine.—Then I must inform you of another plague! That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that I protest I shall be teased out of all spirits!

JULIA. Come, come, Lydia, hope the best —Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

LYDIA. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

JULIA. What was his offence?

LYDIA. Nothing at all!—But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel! And somehow I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity.—So, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was at that time paying his addresses to another woman.—I signed it *your Friend unknown*, showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

JULIA. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

LYDIA. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out. I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him forever.

JULIA. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, and you have thirty thousand pounds!

LYDIA. But you know I lose most of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's consent till of age, and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty. Nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

JULIA. Nay, this is caprice!

LYDIA. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?—I thought her lover Faulkland had inured her to it.

JULIA. I do not love even *his* faults.

LYDIA. But apropos—you have sent to him, I suppose?

JULIA. Not yet, upon my word—nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath.—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

LYDIA. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress (though under the protection of Sir Anthony); yet have you, for this long year, been the slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

JULIA. Nay, you are wrong entirely. We were contracted before my father's death.—*That*, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish.—He is too generous to trifle on such a point—and for his character, you wrong him there, too.—No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness.—Unused to the foppery of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover—but being unhackneyed in the passion, his love is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every thought and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his.—Yet, though his pride calls for this full return—his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him which should entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough.—This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours, but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardor of his love.

LYDIA. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him.—But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are?—Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

JULIA. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet surely that alone were an obligation sufficient.

LYDIA. Obligation!—why, a water spaniel would have done as much!—Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!

JULIA. Come, Lydia, you are too inconsiderate.

LYDIA. Nay, I do but jest—What's here?

Enter LUCY *in a hurry*

LUCY. O ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute just come home with your aunt.

LYDIA. They'll not come here.—Lucy, do you watch. *Exit* LUCY

JULIA. Yet I must go.—Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me as long as she chooses with her select words so ingeniously *misapplied*, without being *mispronounced.*

Re-enter LUCY

LUCY. O lud! ma'am, they are both coming upstairs.

LYDIA. Well, I'll not detain you, coz.—Adieu, my dear Julia; I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

JULIA. Adieu! (*Embrace*) *Exit* JULIA

LYDIA. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books. Quick, quick!—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the closet—put *The Innocent Adultery*[1] into *The Whole Duty of Man*—thrust *Lord Aim*[*s*]*worth*[2] under the sofa—cram *Ovid* behind the bolster—there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket—so, so—now lay

[1] Scarron's romance.
[2] Memoirs in letter form.

Mrs. Chapone in sight, and leave Fordyce's *Sermons* open on the table.

LUCY. Oh, burn it, ma'am! the hairdresser has torn away as far as *Proper Pride.*

LYDIA. Never mind—open at *Sobriety.*—Fling me Lord Chesterfield's *Letters.*—Now for 'em! *Exit* LUCY

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, *and* SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE

MRS. MALAPROP. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton who wants to disgrace her family and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

LYDIA. Madam, I thought you once—

MRS. MALAPROP. You thought, miss!—I don't know any business you have to think at all—thought does not become a young woman; the point we would request of you is that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

LYDIA. Ah, madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

MRS. MALAPROP. But I say it is, miss; there is nothing on earth so easy as to *forget* if a person chooses to set about it.—I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed—and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

SIR ANTHONY. Why, sure she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not!—aye, this comes of her reading!

LYDIA. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

MRS. MALAPROP. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid?—Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

LYDIA. Madam, I tell you plainly that had I no preference for anyone else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

MRS. MALAPROP. What business have you, miss, with *preference* and *aversion*? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little *aversion.* I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a black-a-moor—and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

LYDIA. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

MRS. MALAPROP. Take yourself to your room.—You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humors.

LYDIA. Willingly, ma'am—I cannot change for the worse. *Exit* LYDIA

MRS. MALAPROP. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

SIR ANTHONY. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am,—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by heavens! I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet!

MRS. MALAPROP. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

SIR ANTHONY. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes with marbled covers!—From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

MRS. MALAPROP. Those are vile places, indeed!

SIR ANTHONY. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree, of diabolical knowledge!—It blossoms through the year!—And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, but Sir Anthony, your wife, Lady Absolute, was fond of books.

SIR ANTHONY. Aye—and injury sufficient they were to her, madam—but were I to choose another helpmate, the extent of her erudition should consist in her knowing her simple letters, without their mischievous combinations;—and the summit of her science be—her ability to count as far as twenty.—The first, Mrs. Malaprop, would enable her to work *A. A.* upon my linen;—and the latter would be quite sufficient to prevent her giving me a shirt No. 1, and a stock No. 2.

MRS. MALAPROP. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically!

SIR ANTHONY. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation now, what would you have a woman know?

MRS. MALAPROP. Observe me, Sir Anthony. I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman. For instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments.—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not misspell and mispronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying.—This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you, though I must confess that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

MRS. MALAPROP. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

MRS. MALAPROP. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

SIR ANTHONY. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas "Jack do this";—if he demurred, I knocked him down—and if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations;—and I hope you will represent *her* to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

SIR ANTHONY. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently.—Well, I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl.—Take my advice—keep a tight hand; if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about. *Exit* SIR ANTHONY

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, at any rate I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition.—She has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger—sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton I should have made her confess it.—(*Calls*) Lucy!—Lucy!—Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter LUCY

LUCY. Did you call, ma'am?

MRS. MALAPROP. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him. 419

MRS. MALAPROP. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

LUCY. O Gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out.

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on. 425

LUCY. No, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. So! come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius;—but mind, Lucy—if ever you betray what you are entrusted with—(unless it be other people's secrets to me) you forfeit my malevolence forever:—and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. *Exit* MRS. MALAPROP 434

LUCY. Ha! ha! ha!—So, my dear *simplicity*, let me give you a little respite.—(*Altering her manner*) Let girls in my station be as fond as they please of appearing expert and knowing in their trusts;—commend me to a mask of *silliness*, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account I have turned my *simplicity* lately.—(*Looks at a paper*) For "abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign!—in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve; gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, etc., etc., numberless!—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half."—About a quarter's pay!—Item, "from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her"—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—"two guineas, and a black paduasoy."—Item, "from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters"—which I never delivered—"two guineas and a pair of buckles."—Item, "from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket-pieces, and a silver snuff-box!"—Well done, *simplicity*!—Yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe that he was corresponding, not with the *Aunt*, but with the *Niece*; for though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. *Exit* 465

ACT II

SCENE I. CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE'S *lodgings*

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *and* FAG

FAG. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in. I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you. 4

ABSOLUTE. And what did he say on hearing I was at Bath?

FAG. Sir, in my life I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished! He started back two or three paces, rapped out a dozen interjectoral oaths, and asked what the devil had brought you here! 11

ABSOLUTE. Well, sir, and what did you say?

FAG. Oh, I lied, sir—I forget[1] the precise lie; but you may depend on't, he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what *has* brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently. Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed. 21

ABSOLUTE. You have said nothing to them—?

FAG. Oh, not a word, sir,—not a word! Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)—

ABSOLUTE. 'Sdeath!—you rascal! you have not trusted him! 28

FAG. Oh, *no*, sir—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly! "My master" (said I), "honest Thomas" (you know, sir, one says *honest* to one's inferiors), "is come to Bath to *recruit*." —Yes, sir, I said to *recruit*—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor anyone else.

[1] Q3 *forgot*.

ABSOLUTE. Well, *recruit* will do—let it be so.

FAG. Oh, sir, recruit will do surprisingly—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas that your honor had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority[1] waiters, and thirteen billiard-markers.

ABSOLUTE. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

FAG. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon.—But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it. Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge *indorsements* as well as the bill.

ABSOLUTE. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security.—Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

FAG. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

ABSOLUTE. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

FAG. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in but his gentleman who was with him at Bristol.—I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down—

ABSOLUTE. Go, tell him I am here.

FAG. Yes, sir.—(*Going*) I beg pardon, sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favor to remember that we are *recruiting*, if you please.

ABSOLUTE. Well, well.

FAG. And, in tenderness to my character, if your honor could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation; for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it *hurts* one's conscience to be found out. *Exit*

ABSOLUTE. Now for my whimsical friend—if he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him—

Enter FAULKLAND

—Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

FAULKLAND. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

ABSOLUTE. Faith, much as they were. I have not seen her since our quarrel; however, I expect to be recalled every hour.

FAULKLAND. Why don't you persuade her to go off with you at once?

ABSOLUTE. What, and lose two-thirds of her fortune? You forget that, my friend.—No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

FAULKLAND. Nay, then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of *her*, propose to the aunt *in your own character*, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

ABSOLUTE. Softly, softly; for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and a reversion of a good fortune on my side. No, no; I must prepare her gradually for the discovery and make myself necessary to her before I risk it.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

FAULKLAND. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

ABSOLUTE. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man!

FAULKLAND. I own I am unfit for company.

ABSOLUTE. Am not *I* a lover; aye, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry everywhere with me such a confounded farrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, and all the flimsy furniture of a country miss's brain!

FAULKLAND. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.—You throw for a large stake, but losing—you could stake, and throw again;—but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

ABSOLUTE. But, for Heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present? Has Julia missed writing this last post? or was her last too tender, or too cool; or too grave, or too gay; or—

FAULKLAND. Nay, nay, Jack.

[1] casual.

ABSOLUTE. Why, her love—her honor—her prudence, you cannot doubt.

FAULKLAND. O! upon my soul, I never have;—but what grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand! I fear for her spirits—her health—her life.—My absence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me, may oppress her gentle temper. And for her health—does not every hour bring me cause to be alarmed? If it rains, some shower may even then have chilled her delicate frame!—If the wind be keen, some rude blast may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her for whom only I value mine. O Jack! when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

ABSOLUTE. Aye, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or no.—Well then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia was well and in spirits, you would be entirely content.

FAULKLAND. I should be happy beyond measure—I'm anxious only for that.

ABSOLUTE. Then to cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

FAULKLAND. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

ABSOLUTE. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

FAULKLAND. Can you be serious?

ABSOLUTE. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously, then, it is as I tell you—upon my honor.

FAULKLAND. My dear friend!—[*Calls*] Hollo, Du-Peigne! my hat!—My dear Jack—*now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.*

Enter FAG

FAG. Sir, Mr. Acres just arrived is below.

ABSOLUTE. Stay, Faulkland; this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her.—Fag, show the gentleman up. *Exit* FAG

FAULKLAND. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, very intimate. I insist on your not going; besides, his character will divert you.

FAULKLAND. Well, I should like to ask him a few questions.

ABSOLUTE. He is likewise a rival of mine—that is of my *other self's*, for he does not think his friend Captain Absolute ever saw the lady in question;—and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of *one Beverley*, a concealed skulking rival, who—

FAULKLAND. Hush!—He's here.

Enter ACRES

ACRES. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how do'st thou? just arrived, faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack!—Odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall.

ABSOLUTE. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither.—Give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

ACRES. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you: sir, I solicit your connections.—Hey, Jack—what, this is Mr. Faulkland, who—

ABSOLUTE. Aye, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

ACRES. Odd so! she and your father can be but just arrived before me—I suppose you have seen them.—Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

FAULKLAND. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir.—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

ACRES. Never knew her better in my life, sir,—never better. Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

FAULKLAND. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

ACRES. False, false, sir—only said to vex you; quite the reverse, I assure you.

FAULKLAND. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

ABSOLUTE. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick?

FAULKLAND. No, no, you misunderstand me;—yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

ACRES. Good apartments, Jack.

FAULKLAND. Well, sir, but you were saying that Miss Melville has been so *exceedingly* well—what then, she has been merry and gay I suppose?—Always in spirits—hey?

ACRES. Merry? Odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humor!

FAULKLAND. There, Jack, there.—Oh, by my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome.—What! happy and I away!

ABSOLUTE. Have done. How foolish this is! just now you were only apprehensive for your mistress' *spirits*.

FAULKLAND. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

ABSOLUTE. No, indeed, you have not.

FAULKLAND. Have I been lively and entertaining?

ABSOLUTE. Oh! upon my word, I acquit you.

FAULKLAND. Have I been full of wit and humor?

ABSOLUTE. No, faith, to do you justice, you have been confounded stupid, indeed.

ACRES. What's the matter with the gentleman?

ABSOLUTE. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

FAULKLAND. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, she has a *happy* disposition!

ACRES. That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—There was this time month—Odds minnums and crotchets![1] how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert!

FAULKLAND. There again, what say you to this? you see she has been all mirth and song—not a thought of me!

ABSOLUTE. Pho! man, is not music the food of love?

FAULKLAND. Well, well, it may be so.—Pray, Mr. ——, what's his d—d name?—Do you remember what songs Miss Melville sung?

ACRES. Not I, indeed.

ABSOLUTE. Stay, now, they were some pretty melancholy, purling-stream airs, I warrant. Perhaps you may recollect;—did she sing, *When absent from my Soul's Delight*?

ACRES. No, that wa'n't it.

ABSOLUTE. Or *Go, gentle Gales*? (*Sings*) "Go, gentle gales!"

ACRES. O no! nothing like it. Odds slips! now I recollect one of them—(*Sings*) "My heart's my own, my will is free."

FAULKLAND. Fool! fool that I am to fix all my happiness upon such a trifler! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, sir?

ABSOLUTE. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

FAULKLAND. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have had her sad or sick;—yet surely a sympathetic heart would have shown itself even in the choice of a song—she might have been temperately healthy and somehow, plaintively gay.—But she has been dancing too, I doubt not!

ACRES. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

ABSOLUTE. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

[1] Half and quarter notes.

ACRES. Aye, truly, does she!—There was at our last race ball—

FAULKLAND. Hell and the devil!—There!—there—I told you so! I told you so! Oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing! But her whole feelings have been in opposition with mine!—I have been anxious, silent, pensive, sedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulness.—She has been all health! spirit! laugh! song! dance!—Oh! d—n'd, d—n'd levity!

ABSOLUTE. For Heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so!—Suppose she has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

FAULKLAND. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form's sake.—What, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a *minuet*—hey?

ACRES. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of was her *country-dancing*. Odds swimmings! she has such an air with her!

FAULKLAND. Now, disappointment on her!—Defend this, Absolute; why don't you defend this?—Country-dances! jigs and reels—am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but *country-dances*!—Z—ds! had she made one in a *cotillon*—I believe I could have forgiven even that.—But to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet thro' a string of amorous, palming puppies!—to show paces like a managed filly!—O Jack, there never can be but *one* man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a *country-dance*; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great-uncles and aunts!

ABSOLUTE. Aye, to be sure!—grandfathers and grandmothers!

FAULKLAND. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, 'twill spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the very air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts thro' every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it.

(*Going*)

ABSOLUTE. Aye, aye, you are in a hurry to throw yourself at Julia's feet.

FAULKLAND. [*Going*] I'm not in a humor to be trifled with—I shall see her only to upbraid her.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

FAULKLAND. D—n his news!

Exit FAULKLAND

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland five minutes since, "nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

ACRES. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

ABSOLUTE. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

ACRES. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me—that's a good joke.

ABSOLUTE. There's nothing strange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

ACRES. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief?—ha! ha! But you know I am not my own property; my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but odds frogs and tambours! I shan't take matters so here, now ancient Madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master. I shall straightway cashier the hunting-frock—and render my leather breeches incapable. My hair has been in training some time.

ABSOLUTE. Indeed!

ACRES. Aye—and tho'ff the side curls are a little restive, my hind-part takes to it very kindly.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not.

ACRES. Absolutely I propose so—then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

ABSOLUTE. Spoke like a man! But pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

ACRES. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it —'tis genteel, isn't it?—I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia—a great scholar, I assure you—says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, "By Jove!" or "By Bacchus!" or "By Mars!" or "By Venus!" or "By Pallas," according to the sentiment —so that to swear with propriety, says my little Major, the 'oath should be an echo to the sense'; and this we call the "oath referential," or "sentimental swearing"—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

ABSOLUTE. Very genteel, and very new, indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

ACRES. Aye, aye, the best terms will grow obsolete.—D—ns have had their day.

Enter FAG

FAG. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you.—Shall I show him into the parlor?

ABSOLUTE. Aye—you may.

ACRES. Well, I must be gone—

ABSOLUTE. Stay; who is it, Fag?

FAG. Your father, sir.

ABSOLUTE. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly?

Exit FAG

ACRES. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Adieu, Jack! we must meet at night. Odds bottles and glasses! you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

ABSOLUTE. That I will with all my heart.

Exit ACRES

Now for a parental lecture! I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I am delighted to see you here and looking so well! your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

SIR ANTHONY. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

ABSOLUTE. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, tho' I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

ABSOLUTE. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray frequently that you may continue so.

SIR ANTHONY. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well, then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time. Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission and what I have hitherto allowed you is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, you are very good.

SIR ANTHONY. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, your kindness overpowers me—such generosity makes the gratitude of reason more lively than the sensations even of filial affection.

SIR ANTHONY. I am glad you are so sensible of my attention—and you shall be master of a large estate in a few weeks.

ABSOLUTE. Let my future life, sir, speak my gratitude; I cannot express the sense I have of your munificence.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

SIR ANTHONY. Oh, that shall be as your wife chooses.

ABSOLUTE. My wife, sir!

SIR ANTHONY. Aye, aye, settle that between you—settle that between you.

ABSOLUTE. A *wife*, sir, did you say?

SIR ANTHONY. Aye, a wife.—Why, did not I mention her before?

ABSOLUTE. Not a word of it, sir.

SIR ANTHONY. Odd so!—I mus'n't forget

her tho'.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife; but I suppose that makes no difference.

ABSOLUTE. Sir! sir!—you amaze me!

SIR ANTHONY. Why, what the d—l's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

ABSOLUTE. I was, sir—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

SIR ANTHONY. Why—what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

ABSOLUTE. If my happiness is to be the price, I must beg leave to decline the purchase.—Pray, sir, who is the lady?

SIR ANTHONY. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love and to marry her directly.

ABSOLUTE. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

SIR ANTHONY. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you *to object* to a lady you know nothing of.

ABSOLUTE. Then, sir, I must tell you plainly that my inclinations are fixed on another.

SIR ANTHONY. They are, are they? Well that's lucky—because you will have more merit in your obedience to me.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, my heart is engaged to an angel.

SIR ANTHONY. Then pray, let it send an excuse. It is very sorry—but *business* prevents its waiting on her.

ABSOLUTE. But my vows are pledged to her.

SIR ANTHONY. Let her foreclose, Jack—let her foreclose; they are not worth redeeming. Besides, you have the angel's vows in exchange, I suppose; so there can be no loss there.

ABSOLUTE. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you once for all that in this point I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTHONY. Hark'ee, Jack.—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted;—no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I must repeat—in this I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTHONY. Now d—n me! if ever I call you *Jack* again while I live!

ABSOLUTE. Nay, sir, but hear me.

SIR ANTHONY. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! So give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog!—if you don't, by—

ABSOLUTE. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness? to—

SIR ANTHONY. Z—ds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the Bull's in Cox's Museum,[1] she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah!—yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

ABSOLUTE. This is reason and moderation, indeed!

SIR ANTHONY. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

ABSOLUTE. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humor for mirth in my life.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Tis false, sir! I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you will grin when I am gone, sirrah!

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

SIR ANTHONY. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please!—It won't do with me, I promise you.

ABSOLUTE. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, sir, upon my word.

SIR ANTHONY. So you will fly out! Can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can *passion* do?—*passion* is of no service,

[1] A valuable collection of mechanical toys.

you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate!—There, you sneer again! don't provoke me!—but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the weakness of my disposition!—Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—But mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do everything on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you.—If not, z—ds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest.—I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and d—n me, if ever I call you Jack again! *Exit* SIR ANTHONY 629

ABSOLUTE, *solus*

ABSOLUTE. Mild, gentle, considerate father—I kiss your hands!—What a tender method of giving his opinion in these matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not trust him with the truth.—I wonder what old, wealthy hag it is that he wants to bestow on me!—Yet he married himself for love, and was in his youth a bold intriguer and a gay companion!

Enter FAG

FAG. Assuredly, sir, our father is wrath to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the bannisters all the way. I and the cook's dog stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane, bids me carry that to my master, then kicking the poor Turnspit into the area, d—ns us all, for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance. 649

ABSOLUTE. Cease your impertinence, sir, at present.—Did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way!

Pushes him aside, and exit

FAG, *solus*

FAG. Soh! Sir Anthony trims my master; he is afraid to reply to his father—then vents his spleen on poor Fag!—When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another who happens to come in the way, is the vilest injustice! Ah! it shows the worst temper—the basest— 659

Enter Errand-Boy

BOY. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

FAG. Well, you little dirty puppy, you need not bawl so!—The meanest disposition! the—

BOY. Quick, quick, Mr. Fag! 665

FAG. *Quick! quick!* you impudent jackanapes! Am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred— *Exit, kicking and beating him*

SCENE II. *The North Parade*

Enter LUCY

LUCY. So—I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute. However, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received notice in form. Poor Acres is dismissed!—Well, I have done him a last friendly office, in letting him know that Beverley was here before him.—Sir Lucius is generally more punctual when he expects to hear from his "dear Dalia," as he calls her; I wonder he's not here!—I have a little scruple of conscience from this deceit, tho' I should not be paid so well if my hero knew that Delia was near fifty, and her own mistress.—I could not have thought he would have been so nice, when there's a golden egg in the case, as to care whether he has it from a pullet or an old hen. 17

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER

SIR LUCIUS. Hah! my little ambassadress!—upon my conscience, I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour. 21

LUCY. (*Speaking simply*) O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith!—maybe that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the *window* on purpose that I might not miss you.

LUCY. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

SIR LUCIUS. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

LUCY. Yes, but I have; I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

SIR LUCIUS. Oh, faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed.—Well—let me see what the dear creature says.

LUCY. There, Sir Lucius.

(*Gives him a letter*)

SIR LUCIUS. (*Reads*) "Sir—there is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination; such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger."—Very pretty, upon my word.—"As my motive is interested, you may be assured my love shall never be miscellaneous." Very well.

"Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections. Yours, while meretricious.—Delia." Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language.—Faith, she's quite the queen of the dictionary!—for the devil a word dares refuse coming at her call—though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

LUCY. Aye, sir, a lady of her experience—

SIR LUCIUS. Experience! what, at seventeen?

LUCY. Oh, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off-hand!

SIR LUCIUS. Faith, she must be very deep read to write this way—tho' she is rather an arbitrary writer too; for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note that would get their habeas corpus from any court in christendom.—However, when affection guides the pen, Lucy, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

LUCY. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

SIR LUCIUS. Oh, tell her I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain!—But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent—and do everything fairly.

LUCY. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.[1]

SIR LUCIUS. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it!—I am so poor that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—However, my pretty girl, (*Gives her money*) here's a little something to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening and I'll give you an answer to this. So, hussy, (*Kisses her*) take a kiss beforehand to put you in mind.

LUCY. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never seed such a gemman! My lady won't like you if you're so impudent.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith, she will, Lucy!—That same—pho! what's the name of it?—modesty—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked; so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her *fifty*—my dear.

LUCY. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

SIR LUCIUS. [*Approaches her*] Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

LUCY. For shame now; here is someone coming.

SIR LUCIUS. Oh, faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

Sees FAG.—*Exit, humming a tune*

Enter FAG

FAG. So, so, ma'am! I humbly beg pardon.

LUCY. O lud! now, Mr. Fag, you flurry one so.

[1] particular.

FAG. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please.—You play false with us, madam.—I saw you give the baronet a letter.—My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out, I will.

LUCY. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty.—That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.—She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

FAG. What tastes some people have!—Why, I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times.—But what says our young lady? any message to my master?

LUCY. Sad news, Mr. Fag.—A worse rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

FAG. What, Captain Absolute?

LUCY. Even so—I overheard it all.

FAG. Ha! ha! ha! very good, faith! Goodbye, Lucy, I must away with this news.

LUCY. Well—you may laugh—but it is true, I assure you.—(*Going*) But—Mr. Fag—tell your master not to be cast down by this.

FAG. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

LUCY. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

FAG. Never fear!—never fear!

LUCY. Be sure—bid him keep up his spirits.

FAG. We will—we will. *Exeunt severally*

ACT III

SCENE I. *The North Parade*

Enter ABSOLUTE

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed.—Whimsical enough, faith! My father wants to *force* me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with!—He must not know of my connection with her yet a while.—He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters, and Lydia shall not yet lose her hopes of an elopement.—However, I'll read my recantation instantly.—My conversion is something sudden, indeed, but I can assure him it is very *sincere*. So, so!—here he comes. He looks plaguy gruff. (*Steps aside*)

Enter SIR ANTHONY

[SIR ANTHONY.] No, I'll die sooner than forgive him—*Die*, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him.—At our last meeting his impudence had almost put me out of temper—an obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy!—Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters!—for putting him at twelve years old into a marching regiment and allowing him fifty pounds a year, beside his pay, ever since!—But I have done with him; he's anybody's son, for me.—I never will see him more, never—never—never—never!

ABSOLUTE. [*Approaching*] Now for a penitential face.

SIR ANTHONY. Fellow, get out of my way!

ABSOLUTE. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

SIR ANTHONY. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

ABSOLUTE. A sincere penitent.—I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error and to submit entirely to your will.

SIR ANTHONY. What's that?

ABSOLUTE. I have been revolving and reflecting and considering on your past goodness and kindness and condescension to me.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, sir?

ABSOLUTE. I have been likewise weighing and balancing what you were pleased to mention concerning duty and obedience and authority.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, puppy?

ABSOLUTE. Why then, sir, the result of my reflections is—a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

SIR ANTHONY. Why, now you talk sense—absolute sense. I never heard anything more sensible in my life.—Confound you; you shall be *Jack* again!

ABSOLUTE. I am happy in the appellation.

SIR ANTHONY. Why, then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you—who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and vio-

lence, you silly fellow, prevented my telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare!—What think you of Miss Lydia Languish? 62

ABSOLUTE. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

SIR ANTHONY. Worcestershire? No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment? 69

ABSOLUTE. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, stay—I think I do recollect something.—*Languish! Languish!* She squints, don't she?—a little, red-haired girl? 74

SIR ANTHONY. Squints?—A red-haired girl!—Z—ds! no.

ABSOLUTE. Then I must have forgot; it can't be the same person. 78

SIR ANTHONY. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

ABSOLUTE. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent.—If I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire. 83

SIR ANTHONY. Nay, but Jack, such eyes—such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks—her cheeks, Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips!—O Jack, lips smiling at their own discretion; and if not smiling, more sweetly pouting, more lovely in sullenness. 93

ABSOLUTE. That's she, indeed.—Well done, old gentleman.

SIR ANTHONY. Then, Jack, her neck!—O Jack! Jack!

ABSOLUTE. And which is to be mine, sir—the niece or the aunt? 99

SIR ANTHONY. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you! When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! The *aunt,* indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched anything old or ugly to gain an empire. 106

ABSOLUTE. Not to please your father, sir?

SIR ANTHONY. To please my father! z—ds! not to please—Oh, my father—odd so!—yes—yes; if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter. Tho' he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

ABSOLUTE. I dare say not, sir. 113

SIR ANTHONY. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

ABSOLUTE.[1] Sir, I repeat it; if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice,[2] I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and tho' *one* eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favor of *two*, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article. 128

SIR ANTHONY. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you're an anchorite!—a vile, insensible stock. You a soldier?—you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on!—Odds life! I've a great mind to marry the girl myself! 134

ABSOLUTE. I am entirely at your disposal, sir. If you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the *aunt*; or, if you should change your mind, and take the old lady—'tis the same to me—I'll marry the *niece.*

SIR ANTHONY. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or—but come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must!—Come, now—d—n your demure face!—come, confess, Jack—you have been lying, ha'n't you! You have been lying, hey?—I'll never forgive you if you ha'n't.—So now; own, my dear Jack, you have been playing the hypocrite—hey? I'll never forgive you if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite. 152

ABSOLUTE. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

1 Q1 *Sir Anth.* 2 particular.

SIR ANTHONY. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me; I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly.

ABSOLUTE. Where does she lodge, sir?

SIR ANTHONY. What a dull question! Only on the Grove[1] here.

ABSOLUTE. Oh! then I can call on her in my way to the coffee-house.

SIR ANTHONY. In your way to the coffee-house! You'll set your heart down in your way to the coffee-house, hey? Ah! you leaden-nerved, wooden-hearted dolt! But come along, you shall see her directly; her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along! I'll never forgive you if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myself! *Exeunt*

SCENE II. JULIA'S *dressing-room*

FAULKLAND, *solus*

FAULKLAND. They told me Julia would return directly; wonder she is not yet come! —How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point; but on this one subject, and to this one object, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungenerously fretful and madly capricious! I am conscious of it—yet I cannot correct myself! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy—though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations; yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so *very* happy in my absence. She is coming! Yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

1 One of the fashionable resorts.

Enter JULIA

JULIA. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

FAULKLAND. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome—restrained as we were by the presence of a third person?

JULIA. O Faulkland, when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered more coolness in your first salutation than my long-hoarded joy could have presaged.

FAULKLAND. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I *was* rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health. Sure I had no cause for coldness!

JULIA. Nay then, I see you have taken something ill. You must not conceal from me what it is.

FAULKLAND. Well, then—shall I own to you—but you will despise me, Julia—nay, I despise myself for it.—Yet I *will* own that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbor Acres, was somewhat damped by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire—on your mirth—your singing—dancing, and I know not what! For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear that steals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

JULIA. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

FAULKLAND. They have no weight with me, Julia—No, no! I am happy if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with *mirth*—say that you *thought* of Faulkland in the dance.

JULIA. I never can be happy in your absence.—If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. If I seemed sad, it were to make malice triumph and say that I had fixed my heart on one who left me to lament his roving and my own credulity.—Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not

to upbraid you when I say that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

FAULKLAND. You were ever all goodness to me. Oh, I am a brute when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

JULIA. If ever, without such cause from you as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude.

FAULKLAND. Ah! Julia, that *last* word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your *gratitude*! Search your heart, Julia; perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart.

JULIA. For what quality must I love you?

FAULKLAND. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to *esteem* me. And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation *there* for any part of your affection.

JULIA. Where Nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it, as misplaced. I have seen men who in *this* vain article perhaps might rank above you, but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

FAULKLAND. Now this is not well from *you*, Julia—I despise person in a man; yet if you loved me as I wish, though I were an Ethiop, you'd think none so fair.

JULIA. I see you are determined to be unkind! The *contract* which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's privilege.

FAULKLAND. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. I would not have been more free—no, I am proud of my restraint. Yet—yet—perhaps your high respect alone for this solemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which else had made worthier choice. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought and promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

JULIA. Then, try me now. Let us be free as strangers as to what is past; *my* heart will not feel more liberty!

FAULKLAND. There now! So hasty, Julia? so anxious to be free? If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even tho' I wished it!

JULIA. Oh, you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it.

FAULKLAND. I do not mean to distress you. If I loved you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment.—But hear me! All my fretful doubts arise from this—Women are not used to weigh and separate the motives of their affections. The cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty may sometimes be mistaken for the pleadings of the heart. I would not boast—yet let me say that I have neither age, person, or character, to found dislike on; my fortune, such as few ladies could be charged with *indiscretion* in the match. O Julia! when *Love* receives such countenance from *Prudence,* nice[1] minds will be suspicious of its *birth.*

JULIA. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so.—I have given you no cause for this! *Exit in tears*

FAULKLAND. In tears! Stay, Julia—stay but for a moment!—The door is fastened!—Julia!—my soul—but for one moment!—I hear her sobbing!—'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus! Yet stay! Aye—she is coming now;—how little resolution there is in woman!—how a few soft words can turn them!—No, faith,—she is *not* coming either!—Why, Julia—my love—say but that you forgive me—come but to tell me that.—Now this is being *too* resentful. Stay! she *is* coming too—I thought she would—no *steadiness* in anything! her going away must have been a mere trick then—she sha'n't see that I was hurt by it.—I'll affect indifference —(*Hums a tune; then listens*) No, z—ds! she's *not* coming!—nor don't intend it, I suppose.—This is not *steadiness,* but *obstinacy*!—Yet I deserve it. What, after so

[1] judicious.

long an absence to quarrel with her tenderness?—'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated—and when I distress her so again, may I lose her forever! and be linked instead to some antique virago, whose gnawing passions and long-hoarded spleen shall make me curse my folly half the day and all the night. *Exit*

Scene III. Mrs. Malaprop's *lodgings*

Mrs. Malaprop *and* Captain Absolute

Mrs. Malaprop. Your being Sir Anthony's son, captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation, but from the ingenuity of your appearance I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you. 5

Absolute. Permit me to say, madam, that as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair at present is the honor of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent. 13

Mrs. Malaprop. Sir, you do me infinite honor! I beg, captain, you'll be seated.—[*He obeys*] Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman!—few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman. Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower—beauty! 21

Absolute. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame—they think our admiration of *beauty* so great, that *knowledge* in *them* would be superfluous. Thus, like garden-trees, they seldom show fruits till time has robbed them of the more specious blossom. —Few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once! 30

Mrs. Malaprop. Sir, you overpower me with good-breeding.—He is the very pine-apple of politeness!—You are not ignorant, captain, that this giddy girl has somehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eavesdropping ensign, whom none of us have seen and nobody knows anything of? 38

Absolute. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before.—I'm not at all prejudiced against her on *that* account.

Mrs. Malaprop. You are very good and very considerate, captain. I am sure I have done everything in my power since I exploded the affair; long ago I laid my positive conjunction on her, never to think on the fellow again.—I have since laid Sir Anthony's preposition before her; but, I am sorry to say, she seems resolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her. 50

Absolute. It must be very distressing, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Malaprop. It gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him, but behold! this very day I have interceded another letter from the fellow! I believe I have it in my pocket. 58

Absolute. (*Aside*) The devil! my last note.

Mrs. Malaprop. Aye, here it is.

Absolute. (*Aside*) Aye, my note indeed! —Oh, the little traitress Lucy! 62

Mrs. Malaprop. There, perhaps you may know the writing. (*Gives him the letter*)

Absolute. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I *certainly must* have seen this hand before— 67

Mrs. Malaprop. Nay, but read it, captain.

Absolute. (*Reads*) "My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!"—Very tender, indeed!

Mrs. Malaprop. Tender! aye, and profane too, o' my conscience. 72

Absolute. "I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival"—

Mrs. Malaprop. That's *you*, sir. 76

Absolute. "Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honor."—Well, that's handsome enough. 80

Mrs. Malaprop. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

Absolute. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am. 84

MRS. MALAPROP. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

ABSOLUTE. "As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon who guards you"—Who can he mean by that? 89

MRS. MALAPROP. *Me*, sir!—*me!*—he means *me* there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

ABSOLUTE. Impudent scoundrel!—"it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance, as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity which makes her dress up her coarse features and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand"— 98

MRS. MALAPROP. There, sir! an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! Was ever such a brute! save if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue and a nice derangement of epitaphs! 105

ABSOLUTE. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—"same ridiculous vanity"—

MRS. MALAPROP. You need not read it again, sir. 110

ABSOLUTE. I beg pardon, ma'am—"does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration"—an impudent coxcomb!—"so that I have a scheme to see you shortly with the old harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews."—Was ever such assurance! 118

MRS. MALAPROP. Did you ever hear anything like it?—he'll elude my vigilance, will he?—Yes, yes! ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these floors;—we'll try who can plot best! 123

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy; ha! ha! ha!—Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him; then do you connive at her escape—while *I*, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead. 133

MRS. MALAPROP. I am delighted with the scheme; never was anything better perpetrated!

ABSOLUTE. But, pray, could not I see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little. 139

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a first visit of this kind. There is a decorum in these matters.

ABSOLUTE. O Lord! she won't mind *me*—only tell her Beverley— 145

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir!

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Gently, good tongue.

MRS. MALAPROP. What did you say of Beverley? 149

ABSOLUTE. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below! she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha! 153

MRS. MALAPROP. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves; besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha! Let him if he can, I say again: (*Calling*) Lydia, come down here!—He'll make me a "go-between in their interviews"!—ha! ha! ha!—Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing, ha! ha! ha!—his impudence is truly ridiculous. 162

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am, ha! ha! ha!

MRS. MALAPROP. The little hussy won't hear. Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her. And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman. 169

ABSOLUTE. As you please, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. For the present, captain, your servant. Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I see—"elude my vigilance"; yes, yes; ha! ha! ha! *Exit* 174

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha! one would think now that I might throw off all disguise at once and seize my prize with security; but such is Lydia's caprice that to undeceive were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me. 180

(*Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures*)

Enter LYDIA

LYDIA. What a scene am I now to go thro'! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart. I have heard of girls, persecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favored lover to the generosity of his rival; suppose I were to try it.—There stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but oh, how unlike my Beverley! I wonder he don't begin—truly he seems a very negligent wooer!—Quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first.—Mr. Absolute.

ABSOLUTE. (*Turns round*) Madam.

LYDIA. O heav'ns!—Beverley!

ABSOLUTE. Hush!—hush, my life! softly! be not surprised!

LYDIA. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—for heav'n's sake! how came you here?

ABSOLUTE. Briefly, I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and contriving to have him kept away have passed myself on *her* for Captain Absolute.

LYDIA. Oh, charming! And she really takes you for young Absolute?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, she's convinced of it.

LYDIA. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her sagacity is overreached!

ABSOLUTE. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur; then let me conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution and with a licensed warmth plead for my reward.

LYDIA. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth—that burden on the wings of love?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, come to me, rich only thus—in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia,—for well you know it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

LYDIA. [*Aside*] How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him!

ABSOLUTE. Ah! my soul, what a life will we then live! Love shall be our idol and support! we will worship him with a monastic strictness, abjuring all worldly toys, to center every thought and action there.—Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth, while the surrounding gloom of adversity shall make the flame of our pure love show doubly bright. By heav'ns! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom and say, The world affords no smile to me—but here—(*Embracing her*).—(*Aside*) If she holds out now, the devil is in it!

LYDIA. [*Aside*] Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes! but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis.

[*Re-*]*enter* MRS. MALAPROP, *listening*

MRS MALAPROP. (*Aside*) I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself.

ABSOLUTE. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] *Warmth abated!*—so!—she has been in a passion, I suppose.

LYDIA. No—nor ever can while I have life.

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] An ill-tempered little devil! She'll be *in a passion all her life*—will she?

LYDIA. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] Very dutiful, upon my word!

LYDIA. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] I am astonished at her assurance!—*to his face—this to his face!*

ABSOLUTE. (*Kneeling*) Thus then let me enforce my suit.

MRS. MALAPROP. (*Aside*) Aye, poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity! I can contain no longer.—Why, hussy! hussy!—I have overheard you.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Oh, confound her vigilance!

MRS. MALAPROP. Captain Absolute,—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) So! all's safe, I find. —I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady—

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

LYDIA. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

LYDIA. No, madam—I did not.

MRS. MALAPROP. Good heav'ns! what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman!—Didn't you boast that Beverley, that stroller Beverley, possessed your heart?—Tell me that, I say.

LYDIA. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley—

MRS. MALAPROP. Hold, hold, Assurance! —you shall not be so rude.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech; she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt *me* in the least, I assure you.

MRS. MALAPROP. You are *too* good, captain—*too* amiably patient—but come with me, miss.—Let us see you again soon, captain—remember what we have fixed.

ABSOLUTE. I shall, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

LYDIA. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev—

MRS. MALAPROP. Hussy! I'll choke the word in your throat!—come along—come along.

Exeunt severally, [CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE] *kissing his hand to* LYDIA, MRS. MALAPROP *stopping her from speaking*

SCENE IV. ACRES' *lodgings*

[*Enter*] ACRES *and* DAVID, ACRES *as just dressed*

ACRES. Indeed, David—do you think I become it so?

DAVID. You are quite another creature, believe me, master, by the mass! an'[1] we've any luck, we shall see the Devon monkeyrony in all the print-shops in Bath!

ACRES. Dress *does* make a difference, David.

DAVID. 'Tis all in all, I think.—Difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you. Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard presarve me!" our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honor's favorite, would blush like my waistcoat.—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail!

ACRES. Aye, David, there's nothing like *polishing*.

DAVID. So I says of your honor's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

ACRES. But, David, has Mr. De-la-Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing and chasing and boring.[2]

DAVID. I'll call again, sir.

ACRES. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the post-office.

DAVID. I will.—By the mass, I can't help looking at your head!—if I hadn't been by at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself. *Exit*

ACRES. (*Comes forward, practising a dancing-step*) Sink, slide—coupee.—Confound the first inventors of cotillions! say I—they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen.—I can walk a minuet easy enough when I'm forced!—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country-dance.—Odds jigs and tabors! I never valued your cross-over two couple—figure in—right and left—and

[1] if. [2] Dancing terms.

I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the county!—but these outlandish heathen allemandes[1] and cotillions are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at 'em, that's sure; mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their curst French lingo!—their *pas*[2] this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!—d—n me! my feet don't like to be called paws! no, 'tis certain I have most antigallican toes!

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

ACRES. Show him in.

Enter SIR LUCIUS

SIR LUCIUS. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

ACRES. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

ACRES. Faith! I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last.—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius.—I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-used gentleman.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

ACRES. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I falls as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival, and receive answer that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

SIR LUCIUS. Very ill, upon my conscience.—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

ACRES. Why, there's the matter; she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

SIR LUCIUS. A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

ACRES. *Unfairly?*—to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

SIR LUCIUS. Then, sure you know what is to be done!

ACRES. Not I, upon my soul!

SIR LUCIUS. We wear no swords here, but you understand me.

ACRES. What! fight him?

SIR LUCIUS. Aye, to be sure; what can I mean else?

ACRES. But he has given me no provocation.

SIR LUCIUS. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world.—Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul! it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

ACRES. Breach of *friendship*! aye, aye; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

SIR LUCIUS. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

ACRES. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valor in him and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my side?

SIR LUCIUS. What the d—l signifies *right*, when your *honor* is concerned? Do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad-swords and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

ACRES. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valor rising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

SIR LUCIUS. Ah, my little friend, if we had Blunderbuss Hall here, I could show you a range of ancestry in the O'Trigger line that would furnish the New Room[3]—every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipt through my fingers, I thank God

1 Rapid steps. 2 step. 3 A Bath assembly room, opened in 1771.

our honor and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

ACRES. O Sir Lucius! I have had ancestors too!—every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia!—Odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it—my nerves are become catgut! my sinews wire! and my heart pinchbeck![1] The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast:—Z—ds! as the man in the play says, "I could do such deeds!"

SIR LUCIUS. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

ACRES. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage.—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me. Come, here's pen and paper.—(*Sits down to write*) I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good *bold hand*, however.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray compose yourself.

ACRES. Come—now shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a "damme."

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! pho! do the thing *decently*, and like a Christian. Begin now—"Sir"—

ACRES. That's too civil by half.

SIR LUCIUS. "To prevent the confusion that might arise."

ACRES. Well—

SIR LUCIUS. "From our both addressing the same lady,"

ACRES. Aye, there's the reason—"same lady"—Well?

SIR LUCIUS. "I shall expect the honor of your company."

ACRES. Z—ds! I'm not asking him to dinner.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, be easy.

ACRES. Well then, "honor of your company."

SIR LUCIUS. "To settle our pretensions."

ACRES. Well.

SIR LUCIUS. Let me see—aye, King's-Mead-Fields[2] will do—"in King's-Mead-Fields."

ACRES. So; that's done. Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest—a hand and dagger—shall be the seal.

SIR LUCIUS. You see now this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

ACRES. Aye, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

SIR LUCIUS. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time.—Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

ACRES. Very true.

SIR LUCIUS. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening.—I would do myself the honor to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

ACRES. By my valor, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life! I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson.

SIR LUCIUS. I shall be very proud of instructing you.—Well for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do everything in a mild and agreeable manner.—Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword.

Exeunt severally

ACT IV

SCENE I. ACRES' *lodgings*

ACRES *and* DAVID

DAVID. Then, by the mass, sir! I would do no such thing—ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight when I wa'n't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o't?

ACRES. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius!—Odds sparks and flames! he would have roused your valor.

[1] A cheap alloy used as gold.
[2] Southwest of town.

DAVID. Not he, indeed. I hates such bloodthirsty cormorants. Look'ee, master; if you'd wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-staff, or short-staff, I should never be the man to bid you cry off; but for your curst sharps and snaps, I never knew any good come of 'em.

ACRES. But my *honor*, David—my *honor*! I must be very careful of my honor.

DAVID. Aye, by the mass! and I would be very careful of it; and I think in return my *honor* couldn't do less than to be very careful of *me*.

ACRES. Odds blades, David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honor!

DAVID. I say then, it would be but civil in *honor* never to risk the loss of the *gentleman*.—Look'ee, master, this *Honor* seems to me to be a marvellous false friend—aye, truly, a very courtier-like servant. Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can say of me); well, my honor makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance.—So we fight. (Pleasant enough that!) Boh!—I kill him—(the more's my luck!). Now, pray who gets the profit of it?—why, my *honor*. But put the case that he kills me!—by the mass! I go to the worms and my honor whips over to my enemy.

ACRES. No, David—in that case, odds crowns and laurels! your honor follows you to the grave.

DAVID. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

ACRES. Z—ds! David, you're a coward!—It doesn't become my valor to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors?—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

DAVID. Under favor, the surest way of not disgracing them is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee now, master; to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks, but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

ACRES. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, *very* great danger, hey?—Odds life, people often fight without any mischief done!

DAVID. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you!—Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d—n'd double-barrelled swords, and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think o't—Those be such desperate, bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide 'em!—from a child I never could fancy 'em!—I suppose there an't so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

ACRES. Z—ds! I *won't* be afraid! Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid.—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend Jack Absolute to carry it for me.

DAVID. Aye, i'the name of mischief, let *him* be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter! It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter! and I warrant smells of gunpowder like a soldier's pouch!—Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

ACRES. Out, you poltroon! you ha'n't the valor of a grasshopper.

DAVID. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall!—but I ha' done. How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—Aye, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after! And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honor, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born.

(*Whimpering*)

ACRES. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Captain Absolute, sir.

ACRES. Oh! show him up. *Exit* Servant

DAVID. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

ACRES. What's that!—Don't provoke me, David!

DAVID. Good-bye, master.

(*Whimpering*)

ACRES. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven! *Exit* DAVID

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE

ABSOLUTE. What's the matter, Bob?

ACRES. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead! If I hadn't the valor of St. George and the dragon to boot—

ABSOLUTE. But what did you want with me, Bob?

ACRES. Oh!—there—

(*Gives him the challenge*)

ABSOLUTE. "To Ensign Beverley."—(*Aside*) So—what's going on now?—(*Aloud*) Well, what's this?

ACRES. A challenge!

ABSOLUTE. Indeed! Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

ACRES. Egad, but I will, Jack. Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

ABSOLUTE. But what have I to do with this?

ACRES. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me and give him this mortal *defiance*.

ABSOLUTE. Well, give it to me, and trust me he gets it.

ACRES. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

ABSOLUTE. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

ACRES. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend! You couldn't be my second, could you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. Why no, Bob—not in *this* affair—it would not be quite so proper.

ACRES. Well, then, I must fix on my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

ABSOLUTE. I'll come instantly.—(*Going*) Well, my little hero, success attend you.

ACRES. Stay—stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

ACRES. Aye, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. I will, I will; I'll say you are called in the country "Fighting Bob."

ACRES. Right—right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life if I clear my honor.

ABSOLUTE. No!—that's very kind of you.

ACRES. Why, you don't wish me to kill him—do you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. No, upon my soul, I do not. (*Going*) But "a devil of a fellow," hey?

ACRES. True, true;—but stay—stay Jack! You may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage!

ABSOLUTE. I will, I will.

ACRES. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

ABSOLUTE. Aye, aye—"Fighting Bob!"

Exeunt severally

SCENE II. MRS. MALAPROP'S *lodgings*

MRS. MALAPROP *and* LYDIA

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to him! Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that. A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

LYDIA. (*Aside*) She little thinks whom she is praising!—So is Beverley, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

LYDIA. (*Aside*) Aye, the Captain Absolute *you* have seen.

MRS. MALAPROP. Then he's *so* well bred—*so* full of alacrity and adulation!—and

has *so much* to say for himself—in such good language, too! His physiognomy so grammatical! Then, his presence is so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play[1]:—"Hesperian curls—the front of *Job* himself!—An eye, like March, to threaten at command!—A station, like Harry Mercury, new—" Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

LYDIA. (*Aside*) How enraged she'll be presently when she discovers her mistake!

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. Show them up here.—

Exit Servant

Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

LYDIA. Madam, I have told you my resolution; I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to or look at him.

(*Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door*)

Enter SIR ANTHONY *and* ABSOLUTE

SIR ANTHONY. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop—come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know what's the matter, but if I hadn't held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

MRS. MALAPROP. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause! (*Aside to her*) Lydia, Lydia! rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects!

SIR ANTHONY. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman and the regard due to her aunt's choice and *my* alliance.—(*Aside to him*) Now, Jack, speak to her!

ABSOLUTE. [*Aside*] What the d—l shall I do! [*Apart*] You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here. I knew she wouldn't! I told you so. Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

(ABSOLUTE *seems to expostulate with his father*)

LYDIA. (*Aside*) I wonder I ha'n't heard my aunt exclaim yet! sure, she can't have looked at him!—Perhaps their regimentals are alike and she is something blind.

SIR ANTHONY. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet!

MRS. MALAPROP. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small.—(*Aside to her*) Turn round, Lydia; I blush for you!

SIR ANTHONY. May I not flatter myself that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son?—(*Aside to him*) Why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy—speak!

MRS. MALAPROP. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not *say* she has.—(*Aside to her*) Answer, hussy! why don't you answer?

SIR ANTHONY. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness.—(*Aside to him*) Z—ds! sirrah! why don't you speak?

LYDIA. (*Aside*) I think my lover seems as little inclined to conversation as myself.—How strangely blind my aunt is!

ABSOLUTE. Hem! hem! madam—hem!—(ABSOLUTE *attempts to speak, then returns to* SIR ANTHONY) Faith! sir, I am so confounded! — and — so — so — confused! — I told you I should be so, sir—I knew it.—The—the—tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

SIR ANTHONY. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and speak to her directly!

(ABSOLUTE *makes signs to* MRS. MALAPROP *to leave them together*)

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir Anthony, shall we leave them together?—(*Aside to her*) Ah! you stubborn little vixen!

SIR ANTHONY. Not yet, ma'am, not yet!—(*Aside to him*) What the d—l are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or—

(ABSOLUTE *draws near* LYDIA)

[1] Cf. III, iv, 56–59.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Now Heav'n send she may be too sullen to look round!—I must disguise my voice.—(*Speaks in a low, hoarse tone*) Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not—

SIR ANTHONY. [*Apart*] What the d—l ails the fellow? why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

ABSOLUTE. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—modesty quite choke me!

SIR ANTHONY. Ah! your *modesty* again! —I'll tell you what, Jack, if you don't speak out directly, and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage!—Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favor us with something more than a side-front. 114

(MRS. MALAPROP *seems to chide* LYDIA)

ABSOLUTE. So!—all will out, I see!—(*Goes up to* LYDIA, *speaks softly*) Be not surprised, my Lydia; suppress all surprise at present.

LYDIA. (*Aside*) Heav'ns! 'tis Beverley's voice! Sure he can't have imposed on Sir Anthony too!—(*Looks round by degrees, then starts up*) Is this possible!—my Beverley!—how can this be?—my Beverley?

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Ah! 'tis all over.

SIR ANTHONY. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley!—What can the girl mean?—This is my son, Jack Absolute. 127

MRS. MALAPROP. For shame, hussy! for shame! your head runs so on that fellow that you have him always in your eyes! Beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly. 131

LYDIA. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

SIR ANTHONY. Z—ds! the girl's mad!—her brain's turned by reading. 135

MRS. MALAPROP. O' my conscience, I believe so!—What do you mean by Beverley, hussy? You saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is—your husband that shall be. 140

LYDIA. With all my soul, ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley—

SIR ANTHONY. Oh! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick?—Come here, sirrah; who the d—l are you? 146

ABSOLUTE. Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavor to recollect.

SIR ANTHONY. Are you my son or not? —answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me. 151

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, sir, who are you? —O mercy! I begin to suspect!—

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Ye Powers of impudence, befriend me!—Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be *yours* also, I hope my duty has always shown.—Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer and shall be proud to add *affectionate nephew*.—I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name and a station which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character. 167

LYDIA. (*Sullenly*) So—there will be no elopement after all!

SIR ANTHONY. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance! 173

ABSOLUTE. Oh, you flatter me, sir—you compliment—'tis my *modesty*, you know, sir—my *modesty* that has stood in my way. 177

SIR ANTHONY. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am. So this was your *penitence*, your *duty* and *obedience*! —I thought it was d—n'd sudden!—"You never heard their names before," not you!—"What Languishes of Worcestershire," hey? —"if you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired!"—Ah! you dissembling villain!—What! (*Pointing to* LYDIA) "She squints, don't she?—a little red-haired girl!" —hey?—Why, you hypocritical young rascal!—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head! 192

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis with difficulty, sir.—I *am* confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

MRS. MALAPROP. O lud! Sir Anthony! —a new light breaks in upon me!—hey!—how! what! Captain, did *you* write the letters then?—What—I am to thank *you* for the elegant compilation of "an old weather-beaten she-dragon"—hey?—O mercy!—was it *you* that reflected on my parts of speech?

ABSOLUTE. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last if you don't assist me.—I shall certainly not be able to stand it!

SIR ANTHONY. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive;—odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden that I could find in my heart to be so good-humored! and so gallant!—hey, Mrs. Malaprop? 211

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, Sir Anthony, since *you* desire it, we will not anticipate the past;—so mind, young people—our retrospection will now be all to the future. 215

SIR ANTHONY. Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant!—Jack, isn't the *cheek* as I said, hey?—and the eye, you dog?—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—theirs is the time of life for happiness!—(*Sings*) "Youth's the season made for joy"[1]—hey!—Odds life! I'm in such spirits,—I don't know what I couldn't do!—Permit me, ma'am—(*Gives his hand to* MRS. MALAPROP. *Sings*) Tol-de-rol—'gad, I should like a little fooling myself—Tol-de-rol! de-rol. 229

Exit singing, and handing MRS. MALAPROP

LYDIA *sits sullenly in her chair*

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) So much thought bodes me no good.—So grave, Lydia?

LYDIA. Sir! 232

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) So!—egad! I thought as much!—that d—n'd monosyllable has froze me!—What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our *friends' consent,* as in our *mutual vows*— 237

LYDIA. (*Peevishly*) *Friends' consent*, indeed!

ABSOLUTE. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little *wealth* and *comfort* may be endured, after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as— 244

LYDIA. *Lawyers!* I *hate* lawyers!

ABSOLUTE. Nay then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the licence, and— 248

LYDIA. The *licence!*—I *hate* licence!

ABSOLUTE. O my love! *be* not so unkind!—(*Kneeling*) Thus let me intreat—

LYDIA. Pshaw!—what signifies kneeling when you know I *must* have you? 253

ABSOLUTE. (*Rising*) Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your *heart*—I resign the rest.—(*Aside*) 'Gad, I must try what a little *spirit* will do. 258

LYDIA. (*Rising*) Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating *me* like a *child*!—humoring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success! 265

ABSOLUTE. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

LYDIA. So, while *I* fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them *all*—(*Walking about in heat*) behold! my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and *I* am *myself* the only dupe at last!—

ABSOLUTE. Nay, but hear me— 275

LYDIA. No, sir, you could not think that such paltry artifices could please me when the mask was thrown off! But I suppose since your tricks have made you secure of my *fortune,* you are little solicitous about my *affections.*—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! (*Taking a miniature from her bosom*) which I have worn night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, sir; (*Flings it to him*) and be assured I throw the original from my heart as easily!

ABSOLUTE. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that.—Here (*Taking out a pic-*

[1] From the *Beggar's Opera.*

ture), *here* is Miss Lydia Languish.—What a difference!—aye, *there* is the heav'nly, assenting smile that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar! and *there* the *half* resentful blush, that *would* have checked the ardor of my thanks!—Well, all that's past—all over indeed!—There, madam—in *beauty,* that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I cannot find in my heart to *part with it.* (*Puts it up again*)

LYDIA. (*Softening*) 'Tis *your own* doing, sir—I, I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, most certainly—sure, now this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—there's some spirit in *this*!—What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises—half an hundred vows, under one's hand, with the marks of a dozen or two angels to witness—all that's of no consequence, you know. To be sure, people will say, "That miss didn't know her own mind"—but never mind that.—Or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

LYDIA. There is no bearing his insolence. (*Bursts into tears*)

Enter MRS. MALAPROP *and* SIR ANTHONY

MRS. MALAPROP. (*Entering*) Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing a while.

LYDIA. (*Sobbing*) *This* is *worse* than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate!

SIR ANTHONY. What the devil's the matter now?—Z—ds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the *oddest billing* and *cooing* I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I am quite astonished!

ABSOLUTE. Ask the lady, sir.

MRS. MALAPROP. O mercy!—I'm quite analyzed for my part!—Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

LYDIA. Ask the *gentleman*, ma'am.

SIR ANTHONY. Z—ds! I shall be in a frenzy!—Why, Jack, you scoundrel, you are not come out to be anyone else, are you?

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, sir—there's no more *trick*, is there?—you are not like Cerberus—*three* gentlemen at once, are you?

ABSOLUTE. You'll not let me speak.—I say the *lady* can account for *this* much better than I can.

LYDIA. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again. *There* is the man—I now obey you; for from this moment I renounce him forever. *Exit* LYDIA

MRS. MALAPROP. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is—Why sure, captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

SIR ANTHONY. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it. Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, sir, upon my word—

SIR ANTHONY. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure *'twas* so.

MRS. MALAPROP. O lud! Sir Anthony!—O fie, captain!

ABSOLUTE. Upon my soul, ma'am—

SIR ANTHONY. Come, no excuse, Jack; why, your father, you rogue, was so before you!—the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.—Ha! ha! ha! poor little Lydia! why, you've frightened her, you dog, you have.

ABSOLUTE. By all that's good, sir—

SIR ANTHONY. Z—ds! say no more, I tell you. Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop; you must tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family! Come, get on, Jack. Ha! ha! ha!—Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain! (*Pushing him out*)

MRS. MALAPROP. O! Sir Anthony!—O fie, captain! *Exeunt severally*

SCENE [III]. *The North Parade*

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER

SIR LUCIUS. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself! Upon my conscience,

these officers are always in one's way in love affairs!—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me! And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in 'em, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Hah! isn't this the captain coming?—faith it is!—There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! Who the devil is he talking to? (*Steps aside*)

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE

ABSOLUTE. To what fine purpose I have been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—a little gipsy!—I did not think her romance could have made her so d—ned absurd either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humor in my life!—I could cut my own throat or any other person's with the greatest pleasure in the world!

SIR LUCIUS. [*Aside*] Oh, faith! I'm in the luck of it. I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure, I'm just come in the nick! Now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. (SIR LUCIUS *goes up to* ABSOLUTE)—With regard to that matter, captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

ABSOLUTE. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant—because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

SIR LUCIUS. That's no reason. For give me leave to tell you, a man may *think* an untruth as well as *speak* one.

ABSOLUTE. Very true, sir, but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they *might* stand a chance of escaping controversy.

SIR LUCIUS. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

ABSOLUTE. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius: if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview; for what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

SIR LUCIUS. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension—(*Bowing*) You have named the very thing I would be at.

ABSOLUTE. Very well, sir; I shall certainly not balk your inclinations.—But I should be glad you would please to explain your motives.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it.—However, your memory is very short, or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So no more, but name your time and place.

ABSOLUTE. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening—here, by the Spring Gardens.—We shall scarcely be interrupted.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith! that same interruption in affairs of this nature shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, captain, I should take it as a particular kindness if you'd let us meet in King's-Mead-Fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock and I may dispatch both matters at once.

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

SIR LUCIUS. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, tho' it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled and my mind's at ease! *Exit*

Enter FAULKLAND *meeting* ABSOLUTE

ABSOLUTE. Well met—I was going to look for you. O Faulkland! all the demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed that if I had not the prospect of a resource in being knocked o' the head by and by, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

FAULKLAND. What can you mean?—Has Lydia changed her mind?—I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

ABSOLUTE. Aye, just as the eyes do of a person who squints. When her *love-eye* was fixed on *me*, t'other—her eye of *duty*—was finely obliqued. But when duty bid her point *that* the same way, off t'other turned on a swivel and secured its retreat with a frown!

FAULKLAND. But what's the resource you—

ABSOLUTE. Oh, to wind up the whole, a good-natured Irishman here has—(*Mimicking* SIR LUCIUS) begged leave to have the pleasure of cutting my throat—and I mean to indulge him—that's all.

FAULKLAND. Prithee, be serious!

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis fact, upon my soul! Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock. 'Tis on that account I wished to see you—you must go with me.

FAULKLAND. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure.—Sir Lucius shall explain himself—and I dare say matters may be accommodated. But this evening did you say? I wish it had been any other time.

ABSOLUTE. Why? there will be light enough; there will (as Sir Lucius says) "be very pretty small-sword light, tho' it won't do for a long shot." Confound his long shots!

FAULKLAND. But I am myself a good deal ruffled by a difference I have had with Julia—my vile, tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

ABSOLUTE. By heav'ns, Faulkland, you don't deserve her!

Enter Servant, *gives* FAULKLAND *a letter*

FAULKLAND. Oh, Jack! this is from Julia! I dread to open it—I fear it may be to take a last leave—perhaps to bid me return her letters—and restore—Oh, how I suffer for my folly!

ABSOLUTE. Here, let me see.—(*Takes the letter and opens it*) Aye, a final sentence, indeed!—'tis all over with you, faith!

FAULKLAND. Nay, Jack, don't keep me in suspense!

ABSOLUTE. Hear then—"As I am convinced that my dear Faulkland's own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject. I wish to speak with you as soon as possible. Yours ever and truly, Julia." There's stubbornness and resentment for you!—(*Gives him the letter*) Why, man, you don't seem one whit happier at this!

FAULKLAND. Oh, yes, I am; but—but—

ABSOLUTE. Confound your *buts*.—You never hear anything that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately d—n it with a *but*.

FAULKLAND. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly; don't you think there is something forward—something indelicate in this haste to forgive? Women should never sue for reconciliation; *that* should *always* come from us. *They* should retain their coldness till *wooed* to kindness; and their *pardon*, like their love, should "not unsought be won."[1]

ABSOLUTE. I have not patience to listen to you—thou'rt incorrigible! so say no more on the subject. I must go to settle a few matters. Let me see you before six—remember—at my lodgings.—A poor industrious devil like me, who have toiled and drudged and plotted to gain my ends, and am at last disappointed by other people's folly—may in pity be allowed to swear and grumble a little;—but a captious sceptic in love—a slave to fretfulness and whim—who has no difficulties but of *his own* creating—is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion! *Exit* ABSOLUTE

FAULKLAND. I feel his reproaches!—yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety for the gross content with which *he* tramples on the thorns of love.—His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head which I will instantly pursue.—I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness. If her love prove pure and sterling ore, my name will rest on it with

[1] Paradise Lost, VIII, 502-503.

honor! and once I've stamped it there, I lay aside my doubts forever. But if the dross of selfishness, the alloy of pride predominate, 'twill be best to leave her as a toy for some less cautious fool to sigh for! 196

Exit FAULKLAND

ACT V

SCENE I. JULIA'S *dressing-room*

JULIA, *sola*

JULIA. How this message has alarmed me! What dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge to be alone?—O Faulkland!—how many unhappy moments!—how many tears, have you cost me! 5

Enter FAULKLAND, *muffled up in a riding-coat*

JULIA. What means this?—why this caution, Faulkland?

FAULKLAND. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

JULIA. Heav'ns! what do you mean? 10

FAULKLAND. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited. Nay, start not!—the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me.—I left you fretful and passionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly. O Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!—But no more of that—your heart and promise were given to one happy in friends, character, and station! They are not bound to wait upon a solitary, guilty exile.

JULIA. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the *nature* of your misfortune. Had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought that I could *now* chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love.—My heart has long known no other guardian—I now entrust my person to your honor—we will fly together. When safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled—and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows and tenderest comforter. Then on the bosom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to slumbering, while virtuous love, with a cherub's hand, shall smoothe the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction. 42

FAULKLAND. O Julia, I am bankrupt in gratitude! but the time is so pressing, it calls on you for so hasty a resolution.—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you beside his solitary love? 49

JULIA. I ask not a moment. No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself; and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame and puts the seal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger!—Perhaps this delay— 57

FAULKLAND. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark.—Yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition! 61

JULIA. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy. The little I have will be sufficient to *support* us; and *exile* never should be splendid. 67

FAULKLAND. Aye, but in such an abject state of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed my conscience cannot justify, may haunt me in such gloomy and unsocial fits that I shall hate the tenderness that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondness! 77

JULIA. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you—one who, by bearing *your* infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

FAULKLAND. O Julia, I have proved you

to the quick! and with this useless device I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition? 88

JULIA. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

FAULKLAND. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with resenting a fault which never can be repeated; but sealing, this once, my pardon, let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and monitress and expiate my past folly by years of tender adoration. 98

JULIA. Hold, Faulkland!—that you are free from a crime which I before feared to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice!—These are tears of thankfulness for that! But that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express.

FAULKLAND. By heav'ns, Julia— 106

JULIA. Yet hear me.—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me; in his presence I pledged my hand—*joyfully* pledged it—where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty as well as my affection; hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity—

FAULKLAND. I confess it all! yet hear—

JULIA. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity as cruel as unnecessary—a trick of such a nature, as to show me plainly that when I thought you loved me best, you even then regarded me as a mean dissembler—an artful, prudent hypocrite.

FAULKLAND. Never! never! 129

JULIA. I now see it is not in your nature to be content or confident in love. With this conviction, I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my persevering attention and unreproaching kindness might in time reform your temper, I should have been happy to have gained a dearer influence over you; but I will not furnish you with a licensed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault, at the expense of one who never would contend with you.

FAULKLAND. Nay, but Julia—by my soul and honor, if after this— 141

JULIA. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity, and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you will be to charm you from that unhappy temper which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement.—All I request of *you* is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity, and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your *least* regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world!

Exit

FAULKLAND. She's gone—forever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner that riveted me to my place.—O fool!—dolt—barbarian! Cursed as I am with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind Fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side!—I must now haste to my appointment. Well my mind is tuned for such a scene. I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here.—O Love—tormenter—fiend!—whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! *Exit* 172

Enter Maid *and* LYDIA

MAID. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now—perhaps she is only in the next room. *Exit* Maid

LYDIA. Heigh ho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him. 179

Enter JULIA

LYDIA. O Julia, I have come to you with such an appetite for consolation.—Lud! child, what's the matter with you? You have been crying!—I'll be hanged, if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you.

JULIA. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness. Something *has* flurried me a little—nothing that you can guess at.—(*Aside*) I would not accuse Faulkland to a sister!

LYDIA. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be?

JULIA. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair. Had young Absolute been the person you took him for, I should not have accepted your confidence on the subject without a serious endeavor to counteract your caprice.

LYDIA. So! then I see I have been deceived by every one! But I don't care—I'll never have him.

JULIA. Nay, Lydia—

LYDIA. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield[1] bargain of at last? There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements—so becoming a disguise—so amiable a ladder of ropes!—conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop—and such paragraphs in the newspapers!—Oh, I shall die with disappointment!

JULIA. I don't wonder at it!

LYDIA. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect but, after a deal of flimsy preparation with a bishop's license and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country-church, and have an unmannerly, fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster! Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

JULIA. Melancholy, indeed!

[1] The London cattle market.

LYDIA. How mortifying, to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow!—How often have I stole forth, in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue! There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension! And while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardor!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love.

JULIA. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you not to let a man who loves you with sincerity suffer that unhappiness from your *caprice*, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

LYDIA. O lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, FAG, *and* DAVID

MRS. MALAPROP. So! so! here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, paracide, and salivation going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

JULIA. For Heaven's sake, madam, what's the meaning of this?

MRS. MALAPROP. That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

LYDIA. (*To* FAG) Do, sir, will you inform us?

FAG. Ma'am, I should hold myself very deficient in every requisite that forms the man of breeding if I delayed a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady so deeply interested in the affair as you are.

LYDIA. But quick!—quick, sir!

FAG. True, ma'am, as you say, one should be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for should we be tedious, perhaps while we are flourishing on the subject two or three lives may be lost!

LYDIA. O patience!—do, ma'am, for Heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter.

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the

matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

LYDIA. Then, prithee, sir, be brief.

FAG. Why, then, ma'am, as to murder—I cannot take upon me to say; and as to slaughter or man-slaughter, that will be as the jury finds it.

LYDIA. But who, sir—who are engaged in this?

FAG. Faith, ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I should be very sorry anything was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman! We have lived much together, and always on terms.

LYDIA. But who is this?—who? who? who?

FAG. My master, ma'am—my master—I speak of my master.

LYDIA. Heavens! What, Captain Absolute.

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, to be sure, you are frightened now!

JULIA. But who are with him, sir?

FAG. As to the rest, ma'am, his gentleman can inform you better than I.

JULIA. (*To* DAVID) Do speak, friend.

DAVID. Look'ee, my lady—by the mass! there's mischief going on. Folks don't use to meet for amusement with firearms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say, has an angry savor.[1]

JULIA. But who is there beside Captain Absolute, friend?

DAVID. My poor master—under favor for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or *was*, Squire Acres.—Then comes Squire Faulkland.

JULIA. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavor to prevent mischief.

MRS. MALAPROP. O fie! it would be very inelegant in us; we should only participate things.

DAVID. Ah! do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives—they are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that bloodthirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir Lucius O'Trigger? O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape?—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrifactions!

LYDIA. What are we to do, madam?

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief!—Here, friend, you can show us the place?

FAG. If you please, ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony.

Exit DAVID

MRS. MALAPROP. Come, girls! this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, sir, you're our envoy—lead the way, and we'll precede.

FAG. Not a step before the ladies, for the world!

MRS. MALAPROP. You're sure you know the spot?

FAG. I think I can find it, ma'am; and one good thing is, we shall hear the report of the pistols as we draw near, so we can't well miss them;—never fear, ma'am, never fear.

Exeunt, he talking

SCENE II. *South Parade*

Enter ABSOLUTE, *putting his sword under his great-coat*

ABSOLUTE. A sword seen in the streets of Bath would raise as great an alarm as a mad-dog.—How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I shall be obliged to go without him at last.—Oh, the devil! here's Sir Anthony! How shall I escape him?

(*Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off*)

Enter SIR ANTHONY

SIR ANTHONY. How one may be deceived at a little distance! Only that I see he don't know me, I could have sworn that was Jack!—Hey! 'Gad's life! it is.—Why, Jack, you dog!—what are you afraid of? Hey—sure I'm right.—Why Jack, Jack Absolute!

(*Goes up to him*)

ABSOLUTE. Really, sir, you have the advantage of me. I don't remember ever to have had the honor—my name is Saunderson, at your service.

[1] Q1 *favour*.

SIR ANTHONY. Sir, I beg your pardon—I took you—hey!—why, z—ds! it is—Stay—(*Looks up to his face*) So, so—your humble servant, Mr. Saunderson! Why, you scoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, a joke, sir, a joke! I came here on purpose to look for you, sir.

SIR ANTHONY. You did! well, I am glad you were so lucky. But what are you muffled up so for?—what's this for?—hey?

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis cool, sir, isn't it?—rather chilly somehow.—But I shall be late—I have a particular engagement.

SIR ANTHONY. Stay!—Why, I thought you were looking for me!—Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

ABSOLUTE. Going, sir?

SIR ANTHONY. Aye, where are you going?

ABSOLUTE. Where am I going?

SIR ANTHONY. You unmannerly puppy!

ABSOLUTE. I was going, sir, to—to—to—to Lydia—sir, to Lydia—to make matters up if I could—and I was looking for you, sir, to—to—

SIR ANTHONY. To go with you, I suppose.—Well, come along.

ABSOLUTE. Oh! z—ds! no, sir, not for the world!—I wished to meet with you, sir,—to—to—to—You find it cool, I'm sure, sir—you'd better not stay out.

SIR ANTHONY. Cool!—not at all.—Well, Jack—and what will you say to Lydia?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, sir, beg her pardon, humor her—promise and vow; but I detain you, sir,—consider the cold air on your gout.

SIR ANTHONY. Oh, not at all!—not at all! I'm ,in no hurry.—Ah! Jack, you youngsters, when once you are wounded here (*Putting his hand to* ABSOLUTE's *breast*) Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

ABSOLUTE. Nothing, sir—nothing.

SIR ANTHONY. What's this?—here's something d—d hard.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, trinkets, sir! trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia.

SIR ANTHONY. Nay, let me see your taste.—(*Pulls his coat open; the sword falls*) Trinkets! a bauble for Lydia!—z—ds! sirrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, sir, tho' I didn't mean to tell you till afterwards.

SIR ANTHONY. You didn't?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly!

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I'll explain to you.—You know, sir, Lydia is romantic—dev'lish romantic, and very absurd of course. Now, sir, I intend, if she refuses to forgive me, to unsheath this sword, and swear I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

SIR ANTHONY. Fall upon fiddlestick's end!—why, I suppose it is the very thing that would please her.—Get along, you fool!

ABSOLUTE. Well, sir, you shall hear of my success—you shall hear.—"O Lydia!—forgive me, or this pointed steel"—says I.

SIR ANTHONY. "O booby! stab away and welcome"—says she.—Get along! and d—n your trinkets! *Exit* ABSOLUTE

Enter DAVID, *running*

DAVID. Stop him! stop him! Murder! Thief! Fire!—Stop, fire! Stop, fire!—O Sir Anthony—call! call! bid 'em stop! Murder! Fire!

SIR ANTHONY. Fire! Murder!—Where?

DAVID. Oons! he's out of sight, and I'm out of breath for my part. O Sir Anthony, why didn't you stop him? why didn't you stop him?

SIR ANTHONY. Z—ds! the fellow's mad!—Stop whom? stop Jack?

DAVID. Aye, the captain, sir!—there's murder and slaughter—

SIR ANTHONY. Murder?

DAVID. Aye, please you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all sorts of slaughter to be seen in the fields; there's fighting going on, sir—bloody sword-and-gun fighting.

SIR ANTHONY. Who are going to fight, dunce?

DAVID. Everybody that I know of, Sir Anthony—everybody is going to fight; my poor master, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, your son, the captain—

SIR ANTHONY. Oh, the dog! I see his tricks.—Do you know the place?

DAVID. King's-Mead-Fields.

SIR ANTHONY. You know the way?

DAVID. Not an inch; but I'll call the mayor — aldermen — constables — church-wardens—and beadles; we can't be too many to part them.

SIR ANTHONY. Come along—give me your shoulder! we'll get assistance as we go—the lying villain!—Well, I shall be in such a frenzy!—So—this was the history of his d—d trinkets! I'll bauble him!

Exeunt

SCENE III. *King's-Mead-Fields*

Enter SIR LUCIUS *and* ACRES, *with pistols*

ACRES. By my valor! then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims!—I say it is a good distance.

SIR LUCIUS. Is it for muskets or small field-pieces? Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave those things to me.—Stay now—I'll show you.—(*Measures paces along the stage*) There now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

ACRES. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my aim.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith! then I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius; but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards—

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

ACRES. Odds bullets, no!—by my valor! there is no merit in killing him so near. Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot!—a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me!

SIR LUCIUS. Well—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that.—But tell me now, Mr. Acres; in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

ACRES. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understand—

SIR LUCIUS. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

ACRES. A quietus!

SIR LUCIUS. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

ACRES. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

SIR LUCIUS. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

SIR LUCIUS. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

ACRES. Odds files!—I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius—there. (*Puts himself in an attitude*) A side-front, hey? Odd! I'll make myself small enough; I'll stand edge-ways.

SIR LUCIUS. Now—you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim—(*Levelling at him*)

ACRES. Z—ds! Sir Lucius—are you sure it is not cocked?

SIR LUCIUS. Never fear.

ACRES. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! be easy.—Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it misses a vital part of your right side—'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left!

ACRES. A vital part! Oh, my poor vitals!

SIR LUCIUS. But, there—fix yourself so—(*Placing him*) Let him see the broad-side of your full front—there!—now a ball or two may pass clear through your body, and never do any harm at all.

ACRES. Clear through me!—a ball or two clear through me!

SIR LUCIUS. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

ACRES. Look'ee! Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one; so, by my valor! I will stand edge-ways.

SIR LUCIUS. (*Looking at his watch*) Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—Hah?—no, faith—I think I see them coming.

ACRES. Hey!—what!—coming?—

SIR LUCIUS. Aye.—Who are those yonder getting over the stile?

ACRES. There are two of them, indeed!—Well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius?—we—we—we—we—won't run.

SIR LUCIUS. Run!

ACRES. No—I say—we *won't* run, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS. What the devil's the matter with you?

ACRES. Nothing — nothing — my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

SIR LUCIUS. O fie!—consider your honor.

ACRES. Aye—true—my honor. Do, Sir Lucius, hedge in a word or two every now and then about my honor.

SIR LUCIUS. (*Looking*) Well, here they're coming.

ACRES. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I should almost think I was afraid.—If my valor should leave me!—Valor will come and go.

SIR LUCIUS. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

ACRES. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes—my valor is certainly going!—it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

SIR LUCIUS. Your honor—your honor!—Here they are.

ACRES. O mercy!—now—that I were safe at Clod-Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND *and* ABSOLUTE

SIR LUCIUS. Gentlemen, your most obedient.—Hah!—what—Captain Absolute?—So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account.

ACRES. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

ABSOLUTE. Hark'ee, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

SIR LUCIUS. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly.—So, Mr. Beverley, (*To* FAULKLAND) if you'll choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

FAULKLAND. *My* weapons, sir!

ACRES. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends.

SIR LUCIUS. What, sir, did you not come here to fight Mr. Acres?

FAULKLAND. Not I, upon my word, sir.

SIR LUCIUS. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game, you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party by sitting out.

ABSOLUTE. O pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

FAULKLAND. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter—

ACRES. No, no, Mr. Faulkland; I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

SIR LUCIUS. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him, I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

ACRES. Z—ds,—Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face! If *he* were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

ABSOLUTE. Hold, Bob—let me set you right; there is no such man as Beverley in the case.—The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

SIR LUCIUS. Well, this is lucky.—Now you have an opportunity—

ACRES. What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute?—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Z—ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural.

SIR LUCIUS. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valor has *oozed* away with a vengeance!

ACRES. Not in the least! Odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you a "snug lying" in the "Abbey *here*"; or "pickle" you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall, or any of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

ACRES. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a *coward*; coward was the word, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS. Well, sir?

ACRES. Look'ee, Sir Lucius; 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—*coward* may be said in joke. But if you had called me a *poltroon*, odds daggers and balls—

SIR LUCIUS. Well, sir?

ACRES.—I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres.—He is a most "determined dog"—called in the country "Fighting Bob."—He generally "kills a man a week"—don't you, Bob?

ACRES. Aye—at home!

SIR LUCIUS. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin; so come out, my little counsellor—(*Draws his sword*) and ask the gentleman whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him.

ABSOLUTE. Come on then, sir (*Draws*); since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's *my reply*.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, *and the* Women

DAVID. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular, and bind his hands over to their good behavior.

SIR ANTHONY. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy.—How came you in a duel, sir?

ABSOLUTE. Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his Majesty.

SIR ANTHONY. Here's a pretty fellow; I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his Majesty!—Z—ds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the King's sword against one of his subjects?

ABSOLUTE. Sir! I tell you, that gentleman called me out without explaining his reasons.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Gad!—Sir, how came you to call my son out without explaining your reasons!

SIR LUCIUS. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honor could not brook.

SIR ANTHONY. Z—ds! Jack, how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honor could not brook?

MRS. MALAPROP. Come, come, let's have no honor before ladies.—Captain Absolute, come here; how could you intimidate us so?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

ABSOLUTE. For fear I should be killed or escape, ma'am?

MRS. MALAPROP. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced; speak, child.

SIR LUCIUS. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here. I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence—Now mark—

LYDIA. What is it you mean, sir?

SIR LUCIUS. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

LYDIA. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand and solicit the return of his affections.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, my little angel, say you so?—Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here; with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you—I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency. I ask your par-

don. But for this lady, while honored with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

SIR ANTHONY. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

ACRES. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to anything in the world; and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valor! I'll live a bachelor.

SIR LUCIUS. Captain, give me your hand—an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own handwriting here—

(*Takes out letters*)

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery!—Sir Lucius, perhaps there's some mistake; perhaps I can illuminate—

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business.—Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

LYDIA. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

(LYDIA *and* ABSOLUTE *walk aside*)

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are, I own the soft impeachment—pardon my blushes, I am Delia.

SIR LUCIUS. YouDelia—pho! pho! beeasy.

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

SIR LUCIUS. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension, and whether you or Lucy have put this trick on me, I am equally beholden to you. And to show you I'm not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

ABSOLUTE. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's our friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

SIR LUCIUS. Hah! little Valor!—here, will you make your fortune?

ACRES. Odds wrinkles! no!—But give us your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of *pickling* me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

SIR ANTHONY. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

MRS. MALAPROP. O Sir Anthony—men are all barbarians.

(*All retire but* JULIA *and* FAULKLAND)

JULIA. (*Aside*) He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen; there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me. O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

FAULKLAND. Julia!—How can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet Hope is the child of Penitence.

JULIA. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

FAULKLAND. Now I shall be blest indeed!

(SIR ANTHONY *comes forward*)

SIR ANTHONY. What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant. Come, Julia, I never interfered before, but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland seemed to proceed from what he calls the *delicacy* and *warmth* of his affection for you.—There, marry him directly, Julia; you'll find he'll mend surprisingly!

(*The rest come forward*)

SIR LUCIUS. Come, now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better.

ACRES. You are right, Sir Lucius.—So, Jack, I wish you joy.—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies, come now; to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples and a husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

FAULKLAND. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the

errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine, for having, by her gentleness and candor, reformed the unhappy temper of one who by it made wretched whom he loved most and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

ABSOLUTE. Well, Jack,[1] we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love—with this difference only, that *you* always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

LYDIA. Was always obliged to *me* for it—hey, Mr. Modesty?—But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

JULIA. Then let us study to preserve it so, and while Hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colors which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging Passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropped!

Exeunt Omnes

EPILOGUE

BY THE AUTHOR

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY

Ladies, for *you*—I heard our poet say—
He'd try to coax some *moral* from his play:
"One moral's plain"—cried I—"without more fuss;
Man's social happiness all rests on us;
Thro' all the drama—whether d—n'd or not,
Love gilds the *scene*, and *women* guide the *plot*.
From ev'ry rank obedience is our due—
D'ye doubt?—The world's great stage shall prove it true."
The cit—well skilled to shun domestic strife,
Will sup abroad;—but first—he'll ask his *wife*:
John Trot, his friend—for once, will do the same,
But then—he'll just "step home to tell my dame."
The surly squire—at noon resolves to rule,
And half the day—z—ds! madam is a fool!
Convinced at night, the vanquished victor says,
"Ah, Kate! you women have such coaxing ways."
The jolly toper chides each tardy blade,—
Till reeling Bacchus calls on Love for aid:
Then with each toast he sees fair bumpers swim,
And kisses Chloe on the sparkling brim!
Nay, I have heard that statesmen—great and wise—
Will *sometimes* counsel with a lady's eyes!
The servile suitors watch her various face,
She smiles preferment—or she frowns disgrace;
Curtsies a pension here—there nods a place.
Nor with less awe, in scenes of humbler life,
Is *viewed* the *mistress*, or is *heard* the *wife*.
The poorest peasant of the poorest soil,
The child of poverty, and heir to toil,
Early from radiant Love's impartial light
Steals one small spark, to cheer his world of night;
Dear spark!—that oft through winter's chilling woes
Is all the warmth his little cottage knows!
The wandering tar, who not for *years* has pressed
The widowed partner of his *day* of rest,
On the cold deck—far from her arms removed,
Still hums the ditty which his Susan loved;
And while around the cadence rude is blown,
The boatswain whistles in a softer tone.
The soldier, fairly proud of wounds and toil,
Pants for the *triumph* of his Nancy's smile!
But ere the battle should he list her cries
The lover trembles—and the hero dies!
That heart, by war and honor steeled to fear,
Droops on a sigh and sickens at a tear!

[1] I. e. Faulkland.

But ye more cautious—ye nice judging few,
Who give to Beauty only Beauty's due,
Tho' friends to Love—*ye* view with deep regret
Our conquests marred, our triumphs incomplete,
Till polished wit more lasting charms disclose,
And Judgment fix the darts which Beauty throws!
In female breasts did Sense and Merit rule,
The lover's mind would ask no other school;
Shamed into sense—the scholars of our eyes,
Our beaux from *gallantry* would soon be wise;
Would gladly light, their homage to improve,
The lamp of knowledge at the torch of Love!

THE DUENNA

A Comic Opera by Richard Brinsley Sheridan

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Don Jerome [father of Ferdinand]
Ferdinand
Antonio
Carlos
Isaac Mendoza
Father Paul
Lopez [servant of Ferdinand]
Lewis
[Francis]
[Lay Brother]

Louisa [sister of Ferdinand]
Clara
Margaret (the Duenna)

[Scene: *Seville*]

ACT I

Scene I. *A street*

Enter Lopez, *with a dark lanthorn*

Lopez. Past three o'clock!—soh! a notable hour for one of my regular disposition to be strolling like a bravo through the streets of Seville! Well, of all services, to serve a young lover is the hardest—not that I am an enemy to love, but my love and my master's differ strangely.—Don Ferdinand is much too gallant to eat, drink, or sleep—now, my love gives me an appetite; then I am fond of dreaming of my mistress, and I love dearly to toast her.—This cannot be done without good sleep and good liquor; hence my partiality to a feather-bed and a bottle. What a pity, now, that I have not further time for reflections! but my master expects thee, honest Lopez, to secure his retreat from Donna Clara's window, as I guess. (*Music without*)—Hey! sure, I heard music! So, so! who have we here? Oh, Don Antonio, my master's friend, come from the masquerade to serenade my young mistress, Donna Louisa, I suppose. Soh! we shall have the old gentleman up presently; lest he should miss his son I had best lose no time in getting to my post. *Exit*

Enter Antonio, *with masks and music*

Song

Antonio.

Tell me, my lute, can thy soft strain
So gently speak thy master's pain?
So softly sing, so humbly sigh,
  That, though my sleeping love shall know
  Who sings—who sighs below,
Her rosy slumbers shall not fly?
  Thus, may some vision whisper more
  Than ever I dare speak before.

1 Mask. Antonio, your mistress will never wake while you sing so dolefully; love, like a cradled infant, is lulled by a sad melody.

Antonio. I do not wish to disturb her rest.

1 Mask. The reason is, because you know she does not regard you enough to appear if you awaked her.

Antonio. Nay, then, I'll convince you. (*Sings*)

The breath of Morn bids hence the night;
Unveil those beauteous eyes, my fair;
For till the dawn of love is there,
  I feel no day, I own no light.

Louisa. (*Replies from a window*)

Waking, I heard thy numbers chide,
  Waking, the dawn did bless my sight;
'Tis Phœbus sure, that woos, I cried,
  Who speaks in song, who moves in light.

DON JEROME. (*From a window*)

What vagabonds are these I hear,
Fiddling, fluting, rhyming, ranting,
Piping, scraping, whining, canting?
Fly, scurvy minstrels, fly!

TRIO

LOUISA. Nay, prithee, father, why so rough?
ANTONIO. An humble lover I.
JEROME. How durst you, daughter, lend an ear
To such deceitful stuff?
Quick, from the window, fly!
LOUISA. Adieu, Antonio!
ANTONIO. Must you go?
LOUISA and ANTONIO. We soon, perhaps, may meet again;
For though hard fortune is our foe,
The God of love will fight for us.
JEROME. Reach me the blunderbuss.
ANTONIO and LOUISA. The god of love, who knows our pain,
JEROME. Hence! or these slugs are thro' your brain.

Exeunt severally

SCENE II. *A piazza*

Enter FERDINAND *and* LOPEZ

LOPEZ. Truly, sir, I think that a little sleep, once in a week or so—

FERDINAND. Peace, fool, don't mention sleep to me.

LOPEZ. No, no, sir, I don't mention your low-bred, vulgar, sound sleep; but I can't help thinking that a gentle slumber, or half an hour's dozing, if it were only for the novelty of the thing—

FERDINAND. Peace, booby, I say!—Oh, Clara! dear, cruel disturber of my rest!

LOPEZ. And of mine too.

FERDINAND. 'Sdeath! to trifle with me at such a juncture as this—now to stand on punctilios—love me! I don't believe she ever did.

LOPEZ. Nor I either.

FERDINAND. Or is it that her sex never know their desires for an hour together?

LOPEZ. Ah, they know them oftener than they'll own them.

FERDINAND. Is there, in the world, so inconstant a creature as Clara?

LOPEZ. I could name one.

FERDINAND. Yes; the tame fool who submits to her caprice.

LOPEZ. I thought he couldn't miss it.

FERDINAND. Is she not capricious, teasing, tyrannical, obstinate, perverse, absurd—aye, a wilderness of faults and follies? Her looks are scorn, and her very smiles—'sdeath! I wish I hadn't mentioned her smiles; for she does smile such beaming loveliness, such fascinating brightness.—Oh, death and madness! I shall die if I lose her.

LOPEZ. Oh, those damned smiles have undone all!

AIR

FERDINAND.

Could I her faults remember,
Forgetting ev'ry charm,
Soon would impartial Reason
The tyrant Love disarm.
But when enraged I number
Each failing of her mind,
Love still suggests each beauty,
And sees—while Reason's blind.

LOPEZ. Here comes Don Antonio, sir.

FERDINAND. Well, go you home; I shall be there presently.

LOPEZ. Ah, those cursed smiles! *Exit*

Enter ANTONIO

FERDINAND. Antonio, Lopez tells me he left you chanting before our door; was my father waked?

ANTONIO. Yes, yes. He has a singular affection for music; so I left him roaring at his barred window, like the print of Bajazet in the cage.[1] And what brings you out so early?

FERDINAND. I believe I told you that tomorrow was the day fixed by Don Pedro and Clara's unnatural step-mother for her to enter a convent, in order that her brat might possess her fortune: made desperate by this, I procured a key to the door, and bribed Clara's maid to leave it unbolted; at two this

[1] In *Tamburlaine*.

morning I entered, unperceived, and stole to her chamber. I found her waking and weeping.

ANTONIO. Happy Ferdinand!

FERDINAND. 'Sdeath! hear the conclusion. I was rated as the most confident ruffian for daring to approach her room at that hour of night.

ANTONIO. Aye, aye, this was at first.

FERDINAND. No such thing; she would not hear a word from me, but threatened to raise her mother if I did not instantly leave her.

ANTONIO. Well, but at last?—

FERDINAND. At last! why, I was forced to leave the house as I came in.

ANTONIO. And did you do nothing to offend her?

FERDINAND. Nothing, as I hope to be saved; I believe, I might snatch a dozen or two of kisses.

ANTONIO. Was that all? well, I think I never heard of such assurance!

FERDINAND. Zounds! I tell you I behaved with the utmost respect.

ANTONIO. O Lord! I don't mean you, but in her. But, hark ye, Ferdinand, did you leave your key with them?

FERDINAND. Yes; the maid who saw me out, took it from the door.

ANTONIO. Then, my life for it, her mistress elopes after you.

FERDINAND. Aye, to bless my rival, perhaps; I am in a humor to suspect everybody —you loved her once, and thought her an angel, as I do now.

ANTONIO. Yes, I loved her till I found she wouldn't love me, and then I discovered that she hadn't a good feature in her face.

[*Sings*]

AIR

I ne'er could any lustre see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid who seeks my heart
Cheeks of rose, untouched by art?
I will own the color true
When yielding blushes aid their hue.
Is her hand so soft and pure?
I must press it, to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it, grateful, press again.
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Besides, Ferdinand, you have full security in my love for your sister; help me there, and I can never disturb you with Clara.

FERDINAND. As far as I can, consistently with the honor of our family, you know I will; but there must be no eloping.

ANTONIO. And yet, now, you would carry off Clara.

FERDINAND. Aye, that's a different case— we never mean that others should act to our sisters and wives as we do to others'.—But to-morrow Clara is to be forced into a convent.

ANTONIO. Well, and am not I so unfortunately circumstanced? To-morrow your father forces Louisa to marry Isaac, the Portuguese; but come with me, and we'll devise something, I warrant.

FERDINAND. I must go home.

ANTONIO. Well, adieu!

FERDINAND. But, Antonio, if you did not love my sister, you have too much honor and friendship to supplant me with Clara.

AIR

ANTONIO.

Friendship is the bond of reason;
But if beauty disapprove,
Heaven dissolves all other treason
In the heart that's true to love.

The faith which to my friend I swore,
As a civil oath I view;
But to the charms which I adore
'Tis religion to be true. *Exit*

FERDINAND. There is always a levity in Antonio's manner of replying to me on this subject that is very alarming. 'Sdeath! if Clara should love him after all! [*Sings*]

SONG

Tho' cause for suspicion appears,
  Yet proofs of her love, too, are strong;
I'm a wretch if I'm right in my fears,
  And unworthy of bliss if I'm wrong.
What heart-breaking torments from jealousy flow,
Ah! none but the jealous, the jealous can know!

When blest with the smiles of my fair,
  I know not how much I adore:
Those smiles let another but share,
  And I wonder I prized them no more!
Then whence can I hope a relief from my woe,
When the falser she seems, still the fonder I grow?

Exit

SCENE III. *A room in* DON JEROME'S *house*

Enter LOUISA *and* DUENNA

LOUISA. But, my dear Margaret, my charming Duenna, do you think we shall succeed?

DUENNA. I tell you again I have no doubt on't, but it must be instantly put to the trial.—Everything is prepared in your room, and for the rest, we must trust to fortune.

LOUISA. My father's oath was, never to see me till I had consented to—

DUENNA. 'Twas thus I overheard him say to his friend, Don Guzman:—"I will demand of her to-morrow, once for all, whether she will consent to marry Isaac Mendoza; if she hesitates, I will make a solemn oath never to see or speak to her till she returns to her duty."—These were his words.

LOUISA. And on his known obstinate adherence to what he has once said, you have formed this plan for my escape.—But have you secured my maid in our interest?

DUENNA. She is a party in the whole; but remember, if we succeed, you resign all right and title in little Isaac, the Jew, over to me.

LOUISA. That I do with all my soul; get him, if you can, and I shall wish you joy most heartily. He is twenty times as rich as my poor Antonio. [*Sings*]

AIR

Thou canst not boast of fortune's store,
  My love, while me they wealthy call.
But I was glad to find thee poor;
  For with my heart I'd give thee all.
    And then the grateful youth shall own
    I loved him for himself alone.

But when his worth my hand shall gain,
  No word or look of mine shall show
That I the smallest thought retain
  Of what my bounty did bestow:
    Yet still his grateful heart shall own
    I loved him for himself alone.

DUENNA. I hear Don Jerome coming.—Quick, give me the last letter I brought you from Antonio. You know that is to be the ground of my dismission; I must slip out to seal it up as undelivered. *Exit*

Enter DON JEROME *and* FERDINAND

JEROME. What, I suppose you have been serenading too!—Eh, disturbing some peaceable neighborhood with villainous catgut and lascivious piping! Out on't! you set your sister, here, a vile example; but I come to tell you, madam, that I'll suffer no more of these midnight incantations—these amorous orgies, that steal the senses in the hearing, as they say Egyptian enbalmers serve mummies, extracting the brain thro' the ears. However, there's an end of your frolics—Isaac Mendoza will be here presently, and to-morrow you shall marry him.

LOUISA. Never, while I have life!

FERDINAND. Indeed, sir, I wonder how you can think of such a man for a son-in-law.

JEROME. Sir, you are very kind to favor me with your sentiments—and pray, what is your objection to him?

FERDINAND. He is a Portuguese, in the first place.

JEROME. No such thing, boy; he has forsworn his country.

LOUISA. He is a Jew.

JEROME. Another mistake; he has been a Christian these six weeks.

FERDINAND. Aye, he left his old religion for an estate, and has not had time to get a new one.

LOUISA. But stands like a dead wall between church and synagogue, or like the blank leaves between the Old and New Testaments.

JEROME. Anything more?

FERDINAND. But the most remarkable part of his character is his passion for deceit and tricks of cunning.

LOUISA. Tho', at the same time, the fool predominates so much over the knave that I am told he is generally the dupe of his own art.

FERDINAND. True; like an unskilful gunner he usually misses his aim, and is hurt by the recoil of his own piece.

JEROME. Anything more?

LOUISA. To sum up all, he has the worst fault a husband can have—he's not my choice.

JEROME. But you are his, and choice on one side is sufficient. Two lovers should never meet in marriage. Be you sour as you please, he is sweet-tempered, and for your good fruit there's nothing like ingrafting on a crab.

LOUISA. I detest him as a lover, and shall ten times more as a husband.

JEROME. I don't know that; marriage generally makes a great change. But, to cut the matter short, will you have him or not?

LOUISA. There is nothing else I could disobey you in.

JEROME. Do you value your father's peace?

LOUISA. So much, that I will not fasten on him the regret of making an only daughter wretched.

JEROME. Very well, ma'am, then mark me; never more will I see or converse with you till you return to your duty—no reply. This and your chamber shall be your apartments; I never will stir out without leaving you under lock and key, and when I'm at home no creature can approach you but thro' my library. We'll try who can be most obstinate. Out of my sight! There remain till you know your duty. (*Pushes her out*)

FERDINAND. Surely, sir, my sister's inclinations should be consulted in a matter of this kind, and some regard paid to Don Antonio, being my particular friend.

JEROME. That, doubtless, is a very great recommendation; I certainly have not paid sufficient respect to it.

FERDINAND. There is not a man living I would sooner choose for a brother-in-law.

JEROME. Very possible; and if you happen to have e'er a sister who is not at the same time a daughter of mine, I'm sure I shall have no objection to the relationship; but at present, if you please, we'll drop the subject.

FERDINAND. Nay, sir, 'tis only my regard for my sister makes me speak.

JEROME. Then pray, sir, in future let your regard for your father make you hold your tongue.

FERDINAND. I have done, sir. I shall only add a wish that you would reflect what at our age you would have felt, had you been crossed in your affection for the mother of her you are so severe to.

JEROME. Why, I must confess I had a great affection for your mother's ducats, but that was all, boy.—I married her for her fortune, and she took me in obedience to her father, and a very happy couple we were; we never expected any love from one another, and so we were never disappointed. If we grumbled a little now and then, it was soon over, for we were never fond enough to quarrel; and when the good woman died, why, why—I had as lieve she had lived—and I wish every widower in Seville could say the same.—I shall now go and get the key of this dressing-room; so, good son, if you have any lecture in support of disobedience to give your sister, it must be brief; so make the best of your time, d'ye hear?

Exit JEROME

FERDINAND. I fear, indeed, my friend Antonio has little to hope for; however, Louisa has firmness, and my father's anger will probably only increase her affection.—In our intercourse with the world, it is natural for us to dislike those who are innocently the

cause of our distress, but in the heart's attachment a woman never likes a man with ardor till she has suffered for his sake. (*Noise*)—Soh! what bustle is here?—between my father and the Duenna too. I'll e'en get out of the way. *Exit*

Enter DON JEROME (*with a letter*), *putting in the* DUENNA

JEROME. I'm astonished! I'm thunderstruck! here's treachery and conspiracy with a vengeance!—You, Antonio's creature, and chief manager of this plot for my daughter's eloping!—you, that I placed here as a scarecrow?

DUENNA. What!

JEROME. A scarecrow—to prove a decoy duck; what have you to say for yourself?

DUENNA. Well, sir, since you have forced that letter from me and discovered my real sentiments, I scorn to renounce them.—I am Antonio's friend, and it was my intention that your daughter should have served you as all such old tyrannical sots should be served.—I delight in the tender passions, and would befriend all under their influence.

JEROME. The tender passions! yes, they would become those impenetrable features!—Why, thou deceitful hag! I placed thee as a guard to the rich blossoms of my daughter's beauty.—I thought that dragon's front of thine would cry aloof to the sons of gallantry; steel traps and spring guns seemed writ in every wrinkle of it! But you shall quit my house this instant—the tender passions, indeed! Go, thou wanton sibyl—thou amorous woman of Endor, go!

DUENNA. You base, scurrilous, old—but I won't demean myself by naming what you are.—Yes, savage, I'll leave your den; but I suppose you don't mean to detain my apparel—I may have my things, I presume?

JEROME. I took you, mistress, with your wardrobe on—what have you pilfered, heh?

DUENNA. Sir, I must take leave of my mistress; she has valuables of mine. Besides, my cardinal[1] and veil are in her room.

1 A short, hooded cloak.

JEROME. Your veil, forsooth! What, do you dread being gazed at? or are you afraid of your complexion? Well, go take your leave, and get your veil and cardinal!—soh! you quit the house within these five minutes.—In—in—quick.

Exit DUENNA

Here was a precious plot of mischief!—these are the comforts daughters bring us!

[*Sings*]

AIR

If a daughter you have, she's the plague of your life;
No peace shall you know, tho' you've buried your wife!
At twenty she mocks at the duty you taught her—
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!
Sighing and whining,
Dying and pining,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

When scarce in their teens, they have wit to perplex us,
With letters and lovers forever they vex us;
While each still rejects the fair suitor you've brought her—
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!
Wrangling and jangling,
Flouting and pouting,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

Enter LOUISA, *dressed as the* DUENNA, *with cardinal and veil, seeming to cry*

JEROME. This way, mistress, this way!—What, I warrant, a tender parting; soh!—tears of turpentine down those deal cheeks.—Aye, you may well hide your head—yes, whine till your heart breaks, but I'll not hear one word of excuse—so you are right to be dumb.—This way—this way. *Exeunt*

Enter DUENNA

DUENNA. So speed you well, sagacious Don Jerome! Oh, rare effects of passion and obstinacy!—now shall I try whether I can't play the fine lady as well as my mistress, and if I succeed, I may be a fine lady for the rest of my life.—I'll lose no time to equip myself. *Exit*

SCENE IV. *The court before* DON JEROME'S *house*

Enter DON JEROME *and* LOUISA

JEROME. Come, mistress, there is your way.—The world lies before you; so troop, thou antiquated Eve, thou original sin. Hold, yonder is some fellow skulking; perhaps it is Antonio. Go to him, d'ye hear, and tell him to make you amends; and as he has got you turned away, tell him I say it is but just he should take you himself. Go!

Exit LOUISA

Soh! I am rid of her, thank Heaven! and now I shall be able to keep my oath, and confine my daughter with better security.

Exit

SCENE V. *The piazza*

Enter CLARA *and her* Maid

MAID. But where, madam, is it you intend to go?

CLARA. Anywhere to avoid the selfish violence of my mother-in-law and Ferdinand's insolent importunity.

MAID. Indeed, ma'am, since we have profited by Don Ferdinand's key in making our escape, I think we had best find him, if it were only to thank him.

CLARA. No—he has offended me exceedingly. ([CLARA] *retires*)

Enter LOUISA

LOUISA. [*In soliloquy*] So I have succeeded in being turned out of doors—but how shall I find Antonio? I dare not inquire for him, for fear of being discovered; I would send to my friend Clara, but that I doubt her prudery would condemn me.

MAID. [*To* CLARA] Then suppose, ma'am, you were to try if your friend Donna Louisa would not receive you.

CLARA. No, her notions of filial duty are so severe, she would certainly betray me.

LOUISA. Clara is of a cold temper, and would [think] this step of mine highly forward.

CLARA. Louisa's respect for her father is so great, she would not credit the unkindness of mine.

(LOUISA *turns and sees* CLARA *and* Maid)

LOUISA. Ha! who are those? Sure one is Clara; if it be, I'll trust her.—Clara! (*Advances*)

CLARA. Louisa! and in masquerade too!

LOUISA. You will be more surprised when I tell you that I have run away from my father.

CLARA. Surprised indeed! and I should certainly chide you most horridly, only that I have just run away from mine.

LOUISA. My dear Clara! (*They embrace*)

CLARA. Dear sister truant! and whither are you going?

LOUISA. To find the man I love, to be sure.—And, I presume, you would have no aversion to meet with my brother?

CLARA. Indeed I should; he has behaved so ill to me, I don't believe I shall ever forgive him. [*Sings*]

AIR

When sable night, each drooping plant restoring,
  Wept o'er the flowers her breath did cheer,
As some sad widow, o'er her babe deploring,
  Wakes its beauty with a tear;
When all did sleep, whose weary hearts did borrow
  One hour from love and care to rest,
Lo! as I pressed my couch in silent sorrow,
  My lover caught me to his breast;
    He vowed he came to save me
    From those who would enslave me!
      Then kneeling,
      Kisses stealing,
  Endless faith he swore.
    But soon I chid him thence,
    For had his fond pretence
    Obtained one favor then,
    And he had pressed again,
I feared my treacherous heart might grant him more.

LOUISA. Well, for all this, I would have sent him to plead his pardon, but that I would not yet a while have him know of my flight. And where do you hope to find protection?

CLARA. The Lady Abbess of the convent of St. Catherine is a relation and kind friend of mine; I shall be secure with her, and you had best go thither with me.

LOUISA. No, I am determined to find Antonio first—and, as I live, here comes the very man I will employ to seek him for me.

CLARA. Who is he? he's a strange figure!

LOUISA. Yes, that sweet creature is the man whom my father has fixed on for my husband.

CLARA. And will you speak to him? are you mad?

LOUISA. He is the fittest man in the world for my purpose; for though I was to have married him to-morrow, he is the only man in Seville who, I am sure, never saw me in his life.

CLARA. And how do you know him?

LOUISA. He arrived but yesterday, and he was shown to me from the window as he visited my father.

CLARA. Well, I'll be gone.

LOUISA. Hold, my dear Clara—a thought has struck me; will you give me leave to borrow your name as I see occasion?

CLARA. It will but disgrace you, but use it as you please. I dare not stay—(*Going*)—but, Louisa, if you should see your brother, be sure you don't inform him that I have taken refuge with the Dame Prior of the convent of St. Catherine—on the left-hand side of the piazza which leads to the church of St. Anthony.

LOUISA. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be very particular in my directions where he may not find you.

Exeunt CLARA *and* Maid

—So! my swain yonder has done admiring himself, and draws nearer. (*Retires*)

Enter ISAAC *and* CARLOS; ISAAC *with a pocket glass*

ISAAC. (*Looking in the glass*) I tell you, friend Carlos, I will please myself in the habit of my chin.

CARLOS. But, my dear friend, how can you think to please a lady with such a face?

ISAAC. Why, what's the matter with the face? I think it is a very engaging face; and, I am sure, a lady must have very little taste who could dislike my beard. (*Sees* LOUISA) See now!—I'll die if here is not a little damsel struck with it already!

LOUISA. Signor, are you disposed to oblige a lady who greatly wants your assistance?

(*Unveils*)

ISAAC. [*Aside*] Egad, a very pretty black-eyed girl! she has certainly taken a fancy to me, Carlos.—First, ma'am, I must beg the favor of your name.

LOUISA. (*Aside*) So! it's well I am provided.—My name, sir, is Donna Clara d'Almanza.

ISAAC. What!—Don Guzman's[1] daughter? I'faith, I just now heard she was missing.

LOUISA. But sure, sir, you have too much gallantry and honor to betray me, whose fault is love?

ISAAC. So! a passion for me! poor girl!—Why, ma'am, as for betraying you, I don't see how I could get anything by it; so you may rely on my honor: but as for your love, I am sorry your case is so desperate.

LOUISA. Why so, signor?

ISAAC. Because I am positively engaged to another—an't I, Carlos?

LOUISA. Nay, but hear me.

ISAAC. No, no; what should I hear for? It is impossible for me to court you in an honorable way; and, for anything else, if I were to comply now, I suppose you have some ungrateful brother, or cousin, who would want to cut my throat for my civility. So, truly, you had best go home again.

LOUISA. (*Aside*) Odious wretch!—But, good signor, it is Antonio d'Ercilla on whose account I have eloped.

ISAAC. How! what! it is not with me, then, that you are in love?

LOUISA. No, indeed, it is not.

ISAAC. Then you are a forward, impertinent simpleton! and I shall certainly acquaint your father.

LOUISA. Is this your gallantry?

ISAAC. Yet hold—Antonio d'Ercilla, did you say? [*Aside*] Egad, I may make something of this.—Antonio d'Ercilla?

[1] Q1, spelled "Gusman" and "Guzman."

LOUISA. Yes, and if ever you hope to prosper in love, you will bring me to him.

ISAAC. By St. Iago, and I will too. [*Aside*] Carlos, this Antonio is one who rivals me (as I have heard) with Louisa; now, if I could hamper him with this girl I should have the field to myself—hey, Carlos? A lucky thought, isn't it?

CARLOS. Yes, very good—very good—

ISAAC. Ah! this little brain is never at a loss—cunning Isaac! cunning rogue!—Donna Clara, will you trust yourself a while to my friend's direction?

LOUISA. May I rely on you, good signor?

CARLOS. Lady, it is impossible that I should deceive you. [*Sings*]

AIR

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
  I ne'er could injure you;
For tho' your tongue no promise claimed,
  Your charms would make me true.
To you no soul shall bear deceit,
  No stranger offer wrong;
But friends in all the aged you'll meet,
  And lovers in the young.

But when they learn that you have blest
  Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passion rest,
  And act a brother's part:
Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
  Nor fear to suffer wrong;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
  And brothers in the young.

ISAAC. I'll conduct the lady to my lodgings, Carlos; I must haste to Don Jerome.—Perhaps you know Louisa, ma'am. She is divinely handsome—isn't she?

LOUISA. You must excuse me not joining with you.

ISAAC. Why, I have heard it on all hands.

LOUISA. Her father is uncommonly partial to her, but I believe you will find she has rather a matronly air.

ISAAC. Carlos, this is all envy.—You pretty girls never speak well of one another.—Hark ye, find out Antonio, and I'll saddle him with this scrape, I warrant! Oh, 'twas the luckiest thought!—Donna Clara, your very obedient—Carlos, to your post.

DUET

ISAAC. My mistress expects me, and I must go to her,
  Or how can I hope for a smile?
LOUISA. Soon may you return a prosperous wooer,
  But think what I suffer the while!
Alone, and away from the man whom I love,
  In strangers I'm forced to confide;
ISAAC. Dear Lady, my friend you may trust, and he'll prove
  Your servant, protector, and guide.

AIR

CARLOS.
  Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
  Let me serve thee—then reject me.
  Canst thou trust, and I deceive thee?
  Art thou sad, and shall I grieve thee?
  Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
  Let me serve thee—then reject me.

TRIO

LOUISA. Never may'st thou happy be
  If in aught thou'rt false to me.
ISAAC. Never may he happy be
  If in aught he's false to thee.
CARLOS. Never may I happy be
  If in aught I'm false to thee.
LOUISA. Never may'st thou, etc.
ISAAC. Never may he, etc.
CARLOS. Never may I, etc. *Exeunt*

ACT II

SCENE I. *A library in* DON JEROME'S *house*

Enter DON JEROME *and* ISAAC

JEROME. Ha! ha! ha! run away from her father! has she given him the slip? Ha! ha! ha! poor Don Guzman!

ISAAC. Aye, and I am to conduct her to Antonio; by which means, you see, I shall hamper him so that he can give me no disturbance with your daughter. This is trap, isn't it? a nice stroke of cunning, hey?

JEROME. Excellent! excellent!—yes, yes, carry her to him; hamper him by all means, ha! ha! ha!—Poor Don Guzman!—an old fool!—imposed on by a girl!

ISAAC. Nay, they have the cunning of serpents, that's the truth on't.

JEROME. Pshaw! they are cunning only when they have fools to deal with; why don't my girl play me such a trick—let her cunning overreach my caution, I say!—Hey, little Isaac?

ISAAC. True, true; or let me see any of the sex make a fool of me.—No, no, egad, little Solomon (as my aunt used to call me) understands tricking a little too well.

JEROME. Aye, but such a driveller as Don Guzman.

ISAAC. And such a dupe as Antonio.

JEROME. True; sure, never were seen such a couple of credulous simpletons. But come, 'tis time you should see my daughter; you must carry on the siege by yourself, friend Isaac.

ISAAC. Sir, you'll introduce—

JEROME. No—I have sworn a solemn oath not to see or speak to her till she renounces her disobedience; win her to that, and she gains a father and a husband at once.

ISAAC. Gad, I shall never be able to deal with her alone; nothing keeps me in such awe as perfect beauty. Now there is something consoling and encouraging in ugliness.

[*Sings*]

SONG

Give Isaac the nymph who no beauty can boast,
But health and good humor to make her his toast;
If straight, I don't mind whether slender or fat,
And six feet or four—we'll ne'er quarrel for that.

Whate'er her complexion—I vow I don't care;
If brown it is lasting—more pleasing if fair:
And tho' in her face I no dimples should see,
Let her smile—and each dell is a dimple to me.

Let her locks be the reddest that ever were seen,
And her eyes may be e'en any color but green;
For in eyes, though so various the lustre and hue,
I swear I've no choice—only let her have two.
'Tis true I'd dispense with a throne on her back,
And white teeth, I own, are genteeler than black:
A little round chin too's a beauty, I've heard,
But I only desire—she mayn't have a beard.

JEROME. You will change your note, my friend, when you've seen Louisa.

ISAAC. O Don Jerome, the honor of your alliance—

JEROME. Aye, but her beauty will affect you. She is, tho' I say it, who am her father, a very prodigy; there you will see features with an eye like mine—yes, i'faith, there is a kind of wicked sparkling—something of a roguish brightness that shows her to be my own.

ISAAC. Pretty rogue!

JEROME. Then, when she smiles, you'll see a little dimple in one cheek only; a beauty it is certainly, yet you shall not say which is prettiest, the cheek with the dimple, or the cheek without.

ISAAC. Pretty rogue!

JEROME. Then the roses on those cheeks are shaded with a sort of velvet down that gives a delicacy to the glow of health.

ISAAC. Pretty rogue!

JEROME. Her skin, pure dimity, yet more fair, being spangled here and there with a golden freckle.

ISAAC. Charming pretty rogue! pray, how is the tone of her voice?

JEROME. Remarkably pleasing; but if you could prevail on her to sing, you would be enchanted—she is a nightingale—a Virginian nightingale. But come, come! her maid shall conduct you to her antechamber.

ISAAC. Well, egad, I'll pluck up resolution and meet her frowns intrepidly.

JEROME. Aye! woo her briskly—win her, and give me a proof of your address, my little Solomon.

ISAAC. But hold—I expect my friend Carlos to call on me here. If he comes, will you send him to me?

JEROME. I will.—Lauretta, come!

[*Enter* Maid]

She'll show you to the room. What! do you droop? here's a mournful face to make love with! *Exeunt*

SCENE II. LOUISA'S *dressing-room*

Enter Maid *and* ISAAC

MAID. Sir, my mistress will wait on you presently. (*Goes to the door*)

ISAAC. When she's at leisure—don't hurry her. 4

Exit Maid

I wish I had ever practised a love scene; I doubt I shall make a poor figure. I couldn't be more afraid, if I were[1] going before the Inquisition. So! the door opens; yes, she's coming! The very rustling of her silk has a disdainful sound. 10

Enter DUENNA, *dressed as* LOUISA

—Now dar'n't I look round for the soul of me—her beauty will certainly strike me dumb if I do. I wish she'd speak first.

DUENNA. Sir, I attend your pleasure.

ISAAC. [*Aside*] So! the ice is broke, and a pretty civil beginning too!—Hem! madam—miss—I'm all attention. 17

DUENNA. Nay, sir, 'tis I who should listen, and you propose.

ISAAC. [*Aside*] Egad, this isn't so disdainful neither. I believe I may venture to look. No—I dar'n't; one glance of those roguish sparklers would fix me again. 23

DUENNA. You seem thoughtful, sir; let me persuade you to sit down.

ISAAC. So, so! she mollifies apace—she's struck with my figure! This attitude has had its effect.

DUENNA. Come, sir, here's a chair. 29

ISAAC. Madam, the greatness of your goodness overpowers me—that a lady so lovely should deign to turn her beauteous eyes on me so!

(*She takes his hand; he turns and sees her*)

DUENNA. You seem surprised at my condescension. 35

ISAAC. Why, yes, madam, I am a little surprised at it.—[*Aside*] Zounds! this can never be Louisa; she's as old as my mother!

DUENNA. But former prepossessions give way to my father's commands. 40

ISAAC. (*Aside*) Her father! Yes, 'tis she then.—Lord, lord! how blind some parents are!

DUENNA. Signor Isaac. 44

ISAAC. Truly, the little damsel was right; she has rather a matronly air, indeed! Ah! 'tis well my affections are fixed on her fortune and not her person.

DUENNA. Signor, won't you sit? 49

(*She sits*)

ISAAC. Pardon me, madam, I have scarce recovered my astonishment at—your condescension, madam.—(*Aside*) She has the devil's own dimples to be sure! 53

DUENNA. Nay, you shall not stand! (*He sits*) I do not wonder, sir, that you are surprised at my affability.—I own, signor, that I was vastly prepossessed against you, and being teased by my father, I did give some encouragement to Antonio; but then, sir, you were described to me as a quite different person. 61

ISAAC. Aye, and so you were[2] to me, upon my soul, madam.

DUENNA. But when I saw you, I was never more struck in my life. 65

ISAAC. That was just my case too, madam; I was struck all on a heap, for my part.

DUENNA. Well, sir, I see our misapprehension has been mutual. You expected to find me haughty and averse, and I was taught to believe you a little, black, snub-nosed fellow, without person, manners, or address. 73

ISAAC. [*Aside*] Egad, I wish she had answer'd her picture as well!

DUENNA. But, sir, your air is noble—something so liberal in your carriage, with so penetrating an eye, and so bewitching a smile!

ISAAC. Egad, now I look at her again I don't think she is so ugly. 80

DUENNA. So little like a Jew, and so much like a gentleman!

ISAAC. Well, certainly there is something pleasing in the tone of her voice. 84

DUENNA. You will pardon this breach of

[1] Q1 *was.*

[2] Q1 *was.*

decorum in praising you thus, but my joy at being so agreeably deceived has given me such a flow of spirits!

ISAAC. O dear lady, may I thank those dear lips for this goodness. (*Kisses her*)—(*Aside*) Why, she has a pretty sort of velvet down, that's the truth on't!

DUENNA. O sir, you have the most insinuating manner! But, indeed, you should get rid of that odious beard—one might as well kiss an hedgehog.

ISAAC. Yes, ma'am, the razor wouldn't be amiss—(*Aside*) for either of us.—Could you favor me with a song?

DUENNA. Willingly, sir, though I am rather hoarse—ahem! (*Begins to sing*)

ISAAC. [*Aside*] Very like a Virginia nightingale!—Ma'am, I perceive you're hoarse—I beg you will not distress—

DUENNA. Oh, not in the least distressed; —now, sir. [*Sings*]

SONG

When a tender maid
Is first essayed
By some admiring swain;
How her blushes rise
If she meets his eyes,
While he unfolds his pain!
If he takes her hand—she trembles quite!
Touch her lips—and she swoons outright!
While a pit-a-pat, etc.
Her heart avows her fright.

But in time appear
Fewer signs of fear;
The youth she boldly views:
If her hand he grasp,
Or her bosom clasp,
No mantling blush ensues!
Then to church well pleased the lovers move,
While her smiles her contentment prove;
And a pit-a-pat, etc.
Her heart avows her love.

ISAAC. Charming, ma'am—enchanting! and truly, your notes put me in mind of one that's very dear to me—a lady, indeed, whom you greatly resemble!

DUENNA. How! is there, then, another so dear to you?

ISAAC. Oh, no, ma'am, you mistake; it was my mother I meant.

DUENNA. Come, sir, I see you are amazed and confounded at my condescension, and know not what to say.

ISAAC. It is very true, indeed, ma'am; but it is a judgment—I look on it as a judgment on me—for delaying to urge the time when you'll permit me to complete my happiness, by acquainting Don Jerome with your condescension.

DUENNA. Sir, I must frankly own to you that I can never be yours with my father's consent.

ISAAC. Good lack! how so?

DUENNA. When my father, in his passion, swore he would never see me again till I acquiesced in his will, I also made a vow that I would never take a husband from his hand. Nothing shall make me break that oath; but, if you have spirit and contrivance enough to carry me off without his knowledge, I'm yours.

ISAAC. Hum!

DUENNA. Nay, sir, if you hesitate—

ISAAC. [*Aside*] I'faith, no bad whim this —if I take her at her word I shall secure her fortune, and avoid making any settlement in return; thus I shall not only cheat the lover, but the father too. Oh, cunning rogue, Isaac! Aye, aye, let this little brain alone—egad, I'll take her in the mind.

DUENNA. Well, sir, what's your determination?

ISAAC. Madam, I was dumb only from rapture. I applaud your spirit, and joyfully close with your proposal—for which, thus let me, on this lily hand, express my gratitude.

DUENNA. Well, sir, you must get my father's consent to walk with me in the garden. But by no means inform him of my kindness to you.

ISAAC. No, to be sure, that would spoil all; but, trust me when tricking is the word—let me alone for a piece of cunning. This very day you shall be out of his power.

DUENNA. Well, I leave the management of it all to you; I perceive plain, sir, that you are not one that can be easily outwitted.

ISAAC. Egad, you're right, madam—you're right, i'faith.

Enter Maid

MAID. Here's a gentleman at the door, who begs permission to speak with Signor Isaac.

ISAAC. A friend of mine, ma'am, and a trusty friend—let him come in.

Exit Maid

He is one to be depended on, ma'am.

Enter CARLOS

—(*Aside*) So, coz.

CARLOS. I have left Donna Clara at your lodgings, but can nowhere find Antonio.

ISAAC. Well, I will search him out myself. —Carlos, you rogue, I thrive—I prosper.

CARLOS. Where is your mistress?

ISAAC. There, you booby, there she stands.

CARLOS. Why, she's damned ugly!

ISAAC. Hush! (*Stops his mouth*)

DUENNA. What is your friend saying, signor?

ISAAC. Oh, ma'am, he is expressing his raptures at such charms as he never saw before—eh, Carlos?

CARLOS. Aye, such as I never saw before, indeed!

DUENNA. You are a very obliging gentleman. Well, Signor Isaac, I believe we had better part for the present. Remember our plan.

ISAAC. Oh, ma'am, it is written in my heart, fixed as the image of those divine beauties. Adieu, idol of my soul!—yet once more permit me— (*Kisses her*)

DUENNA. Sweet, courteous sir, adieu!

ISAAC. Your slave eternally.—Come, Carlos, say something civil at taking leave.

CARLOS. I'faith, Isaac, she is the hardest woman to compliment I ever saw; however, I'll try something I had studied for the occasion. [*Sings*]

SONG

Ah! sure a pair was never seen
So justly formed to meet by nature!
The youth excelling so in mien,
The maid in ev'ry grace of feature.
Oh, how happy are such lovers,
When kindred beauties each discovers!
For surely she
Was made for thee,
And thou to bless this lovely creature!

So mild your looks, your children thence
Will early learn the task of duty—
The boys with all their father's sense,
The girls with all their mother's beauty!
Oh, how happy to inherit
At once such graces and such spirit!
Thus while you live
May fortune give
Each blessing equal to your merit!

Exeunt ISAAC, CARLOS, *and* DUENNA

SCENE III. *A library*

JEROME *and* FERDINAND *discovered*

JEROME. Object to Antonio?—I have said it. His poverty—can you acquit him of that?

FERDINAND. Sir, I own he is not over rich, but he is of as ancient and honorable a family as any in the kingdom.

JEROME. Yes, I know the beggars are a very ancient family in most kingdoms, but never in great repute, boy.

FERDINAND. Antonio, sir, has many amiable qualities.

JEROME. But he is poor; can you clear him of that, I say? Is he not a gay, dissipated rake, who has squandered his patrimony?

FERDINAND. Sir, he inherited but little, and that, his generosity, more than his profuseness, has stripped him of; but he has never sullied his honor, which, with his title, has outlived his means.

JEROME. Pshaw! you talk like a blockhead! Nobility, without an estate, is as ridiculous as gold lace on a frieze coat.

FERDINAND. This language, sir, would better become a Dutch or English trader than a Spaniard.

JEROME. Yes; and those Dutch and English traders, as you call them, are the wiser people. Why, booby, in England they were formerly as nice, as to birth and family, as we are; but they have long discovered what

a wonderful purifier gold is, and now no one there regards pedigree in anything but a horse.—Oh, here comes Isaac! I hope he has prospered in his suit.

FERDINAND. Doubtless that agreeable figure of his must have helped his suit surprisingly.

JEROME. How now?

(FERDINAND *walks aside*)

Enter ISAAC

—Well, my friend, have you softened her?

ISAAC. Oh, yes; I have softened her.

JEROME. What, does she come to?

ISAAC. Why, truly, she was kinder than I expected to find her.

JEROME. And the dear little angel was civil, hey?

ISAAC. Yes, the pretty little angel was very civil.

JEROME. I'm transported to hear it. Well, and you were astonished at her beauty, hey?

ISAAC. I was astonished, indeed!—Pray, how old is miss?

JEROME. How old? let me see—eight and twelve—she is twenty.

ISAAC. Twenty?

JEROME. Aye, to a month.

ISAAC. Then, upon my soul, she is the oldest looking girl of her age in Christendom!

JEROME. Do you think so? But I believe you will not see a prettier girl.

ISAAC. Here and there one.

JEROME. Louisa has the family face.

ISAAC. (*Aside*) Yes, egad, I should have taken it for a family face, and one that has been in the family some time too.

JEROME. She has her father's eyes.

ISAAC. (*Aside*) Truly I should have guessed them to have been so.—If she had her mother's spectacles, I believe she would not see the worse.

JEROME. Her aunt Ursula's nose and her grandmother's forehead, to a hair.

ISAAC. (*Aside*) Aye, 'faith, and her grandfather's chin to a hair.

JEROME. Well, if she were[1] but as dutiful as she's handsome—and hark ye, friend Isaac, she is none of your made-up beauties; her charms are of the lasting kind.

ISAAC. I'faith, so they should, for if she be but twenty now, she may double her age before her years will overtake her face.

JEROME. Why, zounds, Master Isaac! you are not sneering, are you?

ISAAC. Why now, seriously, Don Jerome, do you think your daughter handsome?

JEROME. By this light, she's as handsome a girl as any in Seville.

ISAAC. Then, by these eyes, I think her as plain a woman as I ever beheld.

JEROME. By St. Iago, you must be blind!

ISAAC. No, no; 'tis you are partial.

JEROME. How! have I neither sense nor taste? If a fair skin, fine eyes, teeth of ivory, with a lovely bloom and a delicate shape—if these, with a heavenly voice and a world of grace, are not charms, I know not what you call beautiful.

ISAAC. Good lack, with what eyes a father sees!—As I have life, she is the very reverse of all this: as for the dimity skin you told me of, I swear 'tis a thorough nankeen as ever I saw! for her eyes, their utmost merit is in not squinting; for her teeth, where there is one of ivory its neighbor is pure ebony, black and white alternately, just like the keys of an harpsichord. Then, as to her singing and heavenly voice—by this hand! she has a shrill, cracked pipe that sounds, for all the world, like a child's trumpet.

JEROME. Why, you little Hebrew scoundrel, do you mean to insult me? out of my house, I say!

FERDINAND. Dear sir, what's the matter?

JEROME. Why, this Israelite here has the impudence to say your sister's ugly.

FERDINAND. He must be either blind or insolent.

ISAAC. [*Aside*] So! I find they are all in a story. Egad, I believe I have gone too far!

FERDINAND. Sure, sir, there must be some mistake; it can't be my sister whom he has seen.

JEROME. 'Sdeath! you are as great a fool as he! What mistake can there be? did not I lock up Louisa, and haven't I the key in

[1] Q1 *was.*

my own pocket? and didn't her maid show him into the dressing-room? And yet you talk of a mistake; no, the Portuguese meant to insult me—and, but that this roof protects him, old as I am, this sword should do me justice.

ISAAC. [*Aside*] I must get off as well as I can; her fortune is not the less handsome.

DUET

ISAAC. Believe me, good sir, I ne'er meant to offend;
My mistress I love, and I value my friend.
To win her and wed her is still my request,
For better, for worse—and I swear I don't jest.

JEROME. Zounds! you'd best not provoke me, my rage is so high!

ISAAC. Hold him fast, I beseech you, his rage is so high!
Good sir, you're too hot, and this place I must fly.

JEROME. You're a knave and a sot, and this place you'd best fly.

ISAAC. Don Jerome, come now, let us lay aside all joking and be serious.

JEROME. How?

ISAAC. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be hanged if you haven't taken my abuse of your daughter seriously.

JEROME. You meant it so, did not you?

ISAAC. Oh, mercy, no! a joke—just to try how angry it would make you.

JEROME. Was that all, i'faith? I didn't know you had been such a wag—ha! ha! ha! By St. Iago! you made me very angry tho'; well, and you do think Louisa handsome?

ISAAC. Handsome! Venus de Medici was a sibyl to her.

JEROME. Give me your hand, you little jocose rogue. Egad, I thought we had been all off.

FERDINAND. [*Aside*] So! I was in hopes this would have been a quarrel; but I find the Jew is too cunning.

JEROME. Aye, this gust of passion has made me dry. I am seldom ruffled. Order some wine in the next room; let us drink the poor girl's health. Poor Louisa! ugly, hey! Ha! ha! ha! 'Twas a very good joke, indeed!

ISAAC. (*Aside*) And a very true one for all that.

JEROME. And, Ferdinand, I insist upon your drinking success to my friend.

FERDINAND. Sir, I will drink success to my friend with all my heart.

JEROME. Come, little Solomon, if any sparks of anger had remained this would be the only way to quench them. [*Sings*]

TRIO

A bumper of good liquor
Will end a contest quicker
Than justice, judge, or vicar:
So fill a cheerful glass,
And let good humor pass.

But if more deep the quarrel,
Why sooner drain the barrel
Than be the hateful fellow
That's crabbed when he's mellow.

A bumper, etc. *Exeunt*

SCENE IV.[1] ISAAC'S *lodgings*

Enter LOUISA

LOUISA. Was ever truant daughter so whimsically circumstanced as I am! I have sent my intended husband to look after my lover—the man of my father's choice is gone to bring me the man of my own; but how dispiriting is this interval of expectation! [*Sings*]

SONG

What bard, O Time, discover,
With wings first made thee move?
Ah! sure it was some lover
Who ne'er had left his love!

For who that once did prove
The pangs which absence brings,
Tho' but one day
He were away,
Could picture thee with wings?

Enter CARLOS

—So, friend, is Antonio found?

CARLOS. I could not meet with him, lady, but I doubt not my friend Isaac will be here with him presently.

LOUISA. Oh, shame! you have used no diligence.—Is this your courtesy to a lady who has trusted herself to your protection?

CARLOS. Indeed, madam, I have not been remiss.

LOUISA. Well, well; but if either of you had known how each moment of delay weighs upon the heart of her who loves, and waits the object of her love—oh, ye would not then have trifled thus!

CARLOS. Alas! I know it well!

LOUISA. Were you ever in love, then?

CARLOS. I was, lady, but while I have life will never be again.

LOUISA. Was your mistress so cruel?

CARLOS. If she had always been so I should have been happier. [*Sings*]

SONG

Oh, had my love ne'er smiled on me
I ne'er had known such anguish;
But think how false, how cruel she,
To bid me cease to languish!
To bid me hope her hand to gain,
Breathe on a flame half perished;
And then with cold and fixed disdain
To kill the hope she cherished.

Not worse his fate, who on a wreck,
That drove as winds did blow it,
Silent had left the shattered deck,
To find a grave below it:
Then land was cried—no more resigned,
He glowed with joy to hear it;
Not worse his fate, his woe, to find
The wreck must sink ere near it!

LOUISA. As I live, here is your friend coming with Antonio. I'll retire for a moment to surprise him. *Exit*

Enter ISAAC *and* ANTONIO

ANTONIO. Indeed, my good friend, you must be mistaken. Clara d'Almanza in love with me, and employ you to bring me to meet her? It is impossible!

ISAAC. That you shall see in an instant.—Carlos, where is the lady? (CARLOS *points to the door*) In the next room, is she?

ANTONIO. Nay, if that lady is really here she certainly wants me to conduct her to a dear friend of mine, who has long been her lover.

ISAAC. Pshaw! I tell you 'tis no such thing; you are the man she wants, and nobody but you. Here's ado to persuade you to take a pretty girl that's dying for you!

ANTONIO. But I have no affection for this lady.

ISAAC. And you have for Louisa, hey? But take my word for it, Antonio, you have no chance there; so you may as well secure the good that offers itself to you.

ANTONIO. And could you reconcile it to your conscience to supplant your friend?

ISAAC. Pish! Conscience has no more to do with gallantry than it has with politics; why, you are no honest fellow if love cannot make a rogue of you. So come, do go in, and speak to her at last.

ANTONIO. Well, I have no objection to that.

ISAAC. (*Opens the door*) There—there she is—yonder by the window; get in—do. (*Pushes him in, and half shuts the door*)—Now, Carlos, now I shall hamper him, I warrant.—Stay, I'll peep how they go on. Egad, he looks confoundedly posed! Now she's coaxing him—see, Carlos, he begins to come to! Aye, aye, he'll soon forget his conscience.

CARLOS. Look—now they are both laughing!

ISAAC. Aye, so they are—yes, yes, they are laughing at that dear friend he talked of. Aye, poor devil, they have outwitted him.

CARLOS. Now he's kissing her hand.

ISAAC. Yes, yes; 'faith, they're agreed: he's caught, he's entangled. My dear Carlos, we have brought it about. Oh, this little cunning head! I'm a Machiavel—a very Machiavel.

CARLOS. I hear somebody inquiring for you—I'll see who it is.

Exit CARLOS

Enter ANTONIO *and* LOUISA

ANTONIO. Well, my good friend, this lady has so entirely convinced me of the certainty of your success at Don Jerome's, that I now resign my pretensions there.

ISAAC. You never did a wiser thing, believe me—and as for deceiving your friend, that's nothing at all; tricking is all fair in love, isn't it, ma'am?

LOUISA. Certainly, sir, and I am particularly glad to find you are of that opinion.

ISAAC. O lud! yes, ma'am. Let anyone outwit me that can, I say. But here, let me join your hands. [*They obey*]—There, you lucky rogue! I wish you happily married, from the bottom of my soul!

LOUISA. And I am sure if you wish it, no one else should prevent it.

ISAAC. Now, Antonio, we are rivals no more; so let us be friends, will you?

ANTONIO. With all my heart, Isaac.

ISAAC. It is not every man, let me tell you, that would have taken such pains, or been so generous to a rival.

ANTONIO. No, 'faith; I don't believe there's another beside yourself in all Spain.

ISAAC. Well, but you resign all pretensions to the other lady?

ANTONIO. That I do, most sincerely.

ISAAC. I doubt you have a little hankering there still.

ANTONIO. None in the least, upon my soul.

ISAAC. I mean after her fortune.

ANTONIO. No, believe me. You are heartily welcome to everything she has.

ISAAC. Well, i'faith, you have the best of the bargain; as to beauty, twenty to one.—Now I'll tell you a secret—I am to carry off Louisa this very evening.

LOUISA. Indeed!

ISAAC. Yes, she has sworn not to take a husband from her father's hand; so, I've persuaded him to trust her to walk with me in the garden, and then we shall give him the slip.

LOUISA. And is Don Jerome to know nothing of this?

ISAAC. O lud, no! there lies the jest.—Don't you see that by this step I overreach him? I shall be entitled to the girl's fortune without settling a ducat on her—ha! ha! ha! I'm a cunning dog, an't I? A sly little villain, heh?

ANTONIO. Ha! ha! ha! you are indeed!

ISAAC. Roguish, you'll say, but keen, heh?—devilish keen!

ANTONIO. So you are indeed—keen—very keen.

ISAAC. And what a laugh we shall have at Don Jerome's when the truth comes out! hey?

LOUISA. Yes, I'll answer for't, we shall have a good laugh when the truth comes out—ha! ha! ha!

Enter CARLOS

CARLOS. Here are the dancers come to practise the fandango you intended to have honored Donna Louisa with.

ISAAC. Oh, I sha'n't want them; but as I must pay them, I'll see a caper for my money. Will you excuse me?

LOUISA. Willingly.

ISAAC. Here's my friend, whom you may command for any services. Madam, your most obedient.—Antonio, I wish you all happiness. [*Aside*] Oh, the easy blockhead! what a tool I have made of him!—This was a masterpiece! *Exit* ISAAC

LOUISA. Carlos, will you be my guard again, and convey me to the convent of St. Catherine?

ANTONIO. Why, Louisa, why should you go there?

LOUISA. I have my reasons, and you must not be seen to go with me. I shall write from thence to my father; perhaps when he finds what he has driven me to, he may relent.

ANTONIO. I have no hope from him.—O Louisa! in these arms should be your sanctuary.

LOUISA. Be patient but for a little while; my father cannot force me from thence. But let me see you there before evening, and I will explain myself.

ANTONIO. I shall obey.

LOUISA. Come, friend.—Antonio, Carlos has been a lover himself.

ANTONIO. Then he knows the value of his trust.

CARLOS. You shall not find me unfaithful.

TRIO

Soft pity never leaves the gentle breast
Where love has been received a welcome guest;
As wand'ring saints poor huts have sacred made,
He hallows ev'ry heart he once has swayed;
And when his presence we no longer share,
Still leaves compassion as a relic there.

Exeunt

ACT III

SCENE I. *A library*

Enter JEROME *and* Servant

JEROME. Why, I never was so amazed in my life! Louisa gone off with Isaac Mendoza? What, steal away with the very man whom I wanted her to marry—elope with her own husband, as it were?—it is impossible!

SERVANT. Her maid says, sir, they had your leave to walk in the garden while you was abroad. The door by the shrubbery was found open, and they have not been heard of since. *Exit*

JEROME. Well, it is the most unaccountable affair! 'Sdeath! there is certainly some infernal mystery in it I can't comprehend!

Enter Second Servant, *with a letter*

2 SERVANT. Here is a letter, sir, from Signor Isaac. *Exit*

JEROME. So, so! this will explain. Aye: "Isaac Mendoza"—let me see—"Dearest Sir, You must, doubtless, be much surprised at my flight with your daughter"—Yes, 'faith, and well I may.—"I had the happiness to gain her heart at our first interview"—The devil you had!—"But she having unfortunately made a vow not to receive a husband from your hands, I was obliged to comply with her whim"—So, so!—"We shall shortly throw ourselves at your feet, and I hope you will have a blessing ready for one who will then be your son-in-law, Isaac Mendoza." A whim, hey? Why, the devil's in the girl, I think! This morning she would die sooner than have him, and before evening she runs away with him!—Well, well, my will's accomplished, let the motive be what it will; and the Portuguese, sure, will never deny to fulfil the rest of the article.

Enter Servant, *with another letter*

SERVANT. Sir, here's a man below, who says he brought this from my young lady, Donna Louisa. *Exit*

JEROME. How!—yes, it is my daughter's hand indeed! Lord, there was no occasion for them both to write; well, let's see what she says—(*Reads*) "My dearest Father, How shall I entreat your pardon for the rash step I have taken—how confess the motive?"—Pish! hasn't Isaac just told me the motive? One would think they weren't together when they wrote.—"If I have a spirit too resentful of ill usage, I have also a heart as easily affected by kindness."—So, so! here the whole matter comes out; her resentment for Antonio's ill usage has made her sensible of Isaac's kindness. Yes, yes, it is all plain enough. Well?—"I am not married yet, tho' with a man I am convinced adores me."—Yes, yes, I dare say Isaac is very fond of her.—"But I shall anxiously expect your answer, in which, should I be so fortunate as to receive your consent, you will make completely happy your ever affectionate daughter, Louisa." My consent? to be sure she shall have it!—Egad, I was never better pleased; I have fulfilled my resolution—I knew I should.—Oh, there's nothing like obstinacy.—Lewis!

Enter Servant

Let the man who brought the last letter, wait; and get me a pen and ink below. I am impatient to set poor Louisa's heart at rest. Holloa! Lewis! Sancho!

Enter Servants

See that there be a noble supper provided in the saloon to-night. Serve up my best wines, and let me have music, d'ye hear?

SERVANT. Yes, sir. *Exeunt*

JEROME. And order all my doors to be thrown open; admit all guests, with masks or without masks.—I'faith, we'll have a night of it, and I'll let them see how merry an old man can be. [*Sings*]

SONG

Oh, the days when I was young,
When I laughed in fortune's spite;
Talked of love the whole day long,
And with nectar crowned the night!
Then it was, old Father Care,
Little recked I of thy frown;
Half thy malice youth could bear,
And the rest a bumper drown.

Truth, they say, lies in a well,
Why, I vow I ne'er could see;
Let the water-drinkers tell,
There it always lay for me:
For when sparkling wine went round,
Never saw I Falsehood's mask;
But still honest truth I found
At the bottom of each flask.

True, at length my vigor's flown;
I have years to bring decay:
Few the locks that now I own,
And the few I have are gray.
Yet, old Jerome, thou may'st boast,
While thy spirits do not tire,
Still beneath thy age's frost
Glows a spark of youthful fire. *Exit*

SCENE II. *The new piazza*

Enter FERDINAND *and* LOPEZ

FERDINAND. What, could you gather no tidings of her? nor guess where she was gone? O Clara! Clara!

LOPEZ. In truth, sir, I could not.—That she was run away from her father was in everybody's mouth and that Don Guzman was in pursuit of her was also a very common report. Where she was gone, or what was become of her, no one could take upon 'em to say.

FERDINAND. 'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead! she can't be out of Seville.

LOPEZ. So I said to myself, sir; 'sdeath and fury, you blockhead, says I, she can't be out of Seville.—Then some said she had hanged herself for love; and others have it, Don Antonio had carried her off.

FERDINAND. 'Tis false, scoundrel! no one said that.

LOPEZ. Then I misunderstood 'em, sir.

FERDINAND. Go, fool, get home, and never let me see you again till you bring me news of her!

Exit LOPEZ

—Oh, how my fondness for this ungrateful girl has hurt my disposition! [*Sings*]

SONG

Ah, cruel maid! how hast thou changed
The temper of my mind!
My heart by thee from mirth estranged
Becomes, like thee, unkind.
By Fortune favored, clear in fame,
I once ambitious was;
And friends I had that fanned my flame
And gave my youth applause.

But now my weakness all abuse;
Yet vain their taunts on me:
Friends, fortune, fame itself I'd lose
To gain one smile from thee.
Yet only thou shouldst not despise
My folly or my woe;
If I am mad in others' eyes,
'Tis thou hast made me so.

But days like these, with doubting cursed,
I will not long endure;
Am I despised? I know the worst,
And also know my cure.
If false, her vows she dare renounce,
She instant ends my pain;
For, oh! that heart must break at once
Which cannot hate again.

Enter ISAAC

ISAAC. So! I have her safe, and have only to find a priest to marry us. Antonio now may marry Clara or not if he pleases!

FERDINAND. What? what was that you said of Clara?

ISAAC. O Ferdinand!—my brother-in-law that shall be, who thought of meeting you?

FERDINAND. But what of Clara?

ISAAC. I'faith, you shall hear.—This morning, as I was coming down, I met a pretty damsel, who told me her name was Clara d'Almanza, and begged my protection.

FERDINAND. How!

ISAAC. She said she had eloped from her father, Don Guzman, but that love for a young gentleman in Seville was the cause.

FERDINAND. Oh, heavens! did she confess it?

ISAAC. Oh, yes, she confessed at once; but then, says she, my lover is not informed of my flight, nor suspects my intention.

FERDINAND. (*Aside*) Dear creature! no more I did indeed! Oh, I am the happiest fellow!—Well, Isaac?

ISAAC. Why, then she entreated me to find him out for her, and bring him to her.

FERDINAND. [*Aside*] Good heavens, how lucky!—Well, come along; let's lose no time. (*Pulling him*)

ISAAC. Zooks! where are we to go?

FERDINAND. Why, did anything more pass?

ISAAC. Anything more! yes. The end on't was, that I was moved with her speeches and complied with her desires.

FERDINAND. Well, and where is she?

ISAAC. Where is she? why, don't I tell you, I complied with her request and left her safe in the arms of her lover.

FERDINAND. 'Sdeath, you trifle with me!—I have never seen her.

ISAAC. You? O lud, no!—How the devil should you? 'Twas Antonio she wanted; and with Antonio I left her.

FERDINAND. (*Aside*) Hell and madness!—What, Antonio d'Ercilla?

ISAAC. Aye, aye, the very man; and the best part of it was, he was shy of taking her at first. He talked a good deal about honor, and conscience, and deceiving some dear friend; but lord, we soon overruled that.

FERDINAND. You did?

ISAAC. Oh, yes, presently. "Such deceit!" says he. "Pish!" says the lady, "tricking is all fair in love."—"But then, my friend," says he.—"Pshaw! damn your friend!" says I.—So, poor wretch, he has no chance—no, no; he may hang himself as soon as he pleases.

FERDINAND. [*Aside*] I must go, or I shall betray myself.

ISAAC. But stay, Ferdinand, you ha'n't heard the best of the joke.

FERDINAND. Curse on your joke!

ISAAC. Good lack! what's the matter now? I thought to have diverted you.

FERDINAND. Be racked! tortured! damned—

ISAAC. Why, sure you are not the poor devil of a lover, are you? [*Aside*] I'faith, as sure as can be, he is.—This is a better joke than t'other—ha! ha! ha!

FERDINAND. What, do you laugh? you vile, michievous varlet! (*Collars him*) But that you're beneath my anger, I'd tear your heart out. (*Throws him from him*)

ISAAC. O mercy! here's usage for a brother-in-law!

FERDINAND. But hark ye, rascal! tell me directly where these false friends are gone, or by my soul— (*Draws*)

ISAAC. For Heaven's sake, now, my dear brother-in-law! don't be in a rage. I'll recollect as well as I can.

FERDINAND. Be quick then!

ISAAC. I will, I will—but people's memories differ—some have a treacherous memory. Now, mine is a cowardly memory; it takes to its heels at sight of a drawn sword—it does, i'faith; and I could as soon fight as recollect.

FERDINAND. Zounds! tell me the truth, and I won't hurt you.

ISAAC. No, no, I know you won't, my dear brother-in-law; but that ill-looking thing there—

FERDINAND. What, then, you won't tell me?

ISAAC. Yes, yes, I will; I'll tell you all, upon my soul—but why need you listen sword in hand?

FERDINAND. Why, there. (*Puts up*)—Now.

ISAAC. Why, then, I believe they are gone to—that is, my friend Carlos told me, he had left Donna Clara—dear Ferdinand,

keep your hands off!—at the convent of St. Catherine.

FERDINAND. St. Catherine!

ISAAC. Yes; and that Antonio was to come to her there.

FERDINAND. Is this the truth?

ISAAC. It is, indeed—and all I know, as I hope for life.

FERDINAND. Well, coward, take your life. 'Tis that false, dishonorable Antonio who shall feel my vengeance.

ISAAC. Aye, aye, kill him; cut his throat, and welcome.

FERDINAND. But for Clara—infamy on her! she is not worth my resentment.

ISAAC. No more she is, my dear brother-in-law. I'faith, I would not be angry about her; she is not worth it, indeed.

FERDINAND. 'Tis false! she is worth the enmity of princes.

ISAAC. True, true, so she is, and I pity you exceedingly for having lost her.

FERDINAND. 'Sdeath, you rascal! how durst you talk of pitying me?

ISAAC. O dear brother-in-law, I beg pardon! I don't pity you in the least, upon my soul.

FERDINAND. Get hence, fool, and provoke me no further! Nothing but your insignificance saves you.

ISAAC. I'faith, then my insignificance is the best friend I have.—I'm going, dear Ferdinand.—What a curst, hot-headed bully it is! *Exeunt*

SCENE III. *The garden of the convent*

Enter LOUISA *and* CLARA

LOUISA. And you really wish my brother may not find you out?

CLARA. Why else have I concealed myself under this disguise?

LOUISA. Why, perhaps because the dress becomes you, for you certainly don't intend to be a nun for life.

CLARA. If, indeed, Ferdinand had not offended me so last night—

LOUISA. Come, come, it was his fear of losing you made him so rash.

CLARA. Well, you may think me cruel—but I swear, if he were here this instant, I believe I should forgive him. [*Sings*]

SONG

By him we love offended,
  How soon our anger flies!
One day apart, 'tis ended;
  Behold him, and it dies.

Last night, your roving brother,
  Enraged, I bade depart;
And sure his rude presumption
  Deserved to lose my heart.

Yet, were he now before me,
  In spite of injured pride,
I fear my eyes would pardon
  Before my tongue could chide.

With truth, the bold deceiver
  To me thus oft has said:
"In vain would Clara slight me,
  In vain would she upbraid;
No scorn those lips discover,
  Where dimples laugh the while;
No frowns appear resentful
  Where Heaven has stamped a smile."

LOUISA. I protest, Clara, I shall begin to think you are seriously resolved to enter on your probation.

CLARA. And seriously I very much doubt whether the character of a nun would not become me best.

LOUISA. Why, to be sure, the character of a nun is a very becoming one at a masquerade; but no pretty woman, in her senses, ever thought of taking the veil for above a night.

CLARA. Yonder I see your Antonio is returned.—I shall only interrupt you; ah, Louisa, with what happy eagerness you turn to look for him! *Exit*

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO. Well, my Louisa, any news since I left you?

LOUISA. None. The messenger is not returned from my father.

ANTONIO. Well, I confess, I do not perceive what we are to expect from him.

LOUISA. I shall be easier, however, in having made the trial. I do not doubt your sincerity, Antonio; but there is a chilling air around poverty that often kills affection that was not nursed in it. If we would make love our household god, we had best secure him a comfortable roof.

Enter Maid, *with a letter*

LOUISA. My father's answer, I suppose.

ANTONIO. My dearest Louisa, you may be assured that it contains nothing but threats and reproaches.

LOUISA. Let us see, however—(*Reads*) "Dearest daughter, make your lover happy; you have my full consent to marry as your whim has chosen, but be sure come home and sup with your affectionate father."

ANTONIO. You jest, Louisa!

LOUISA. (*Gives him the letter*) Read—read!

ANTONIO. 'Tis so, by heavens!—Sure, there must be some mistake; but that's none of our business.—Now, Louisa, you have no excuse for delay.

LOUISA. Shall we not then return and thank my father?

ANTONIO. But first let the priest put it out of his power to recall his word. I'll fly to procure one.

LOUISA. Nay, if you part with me again, perhaps you may lose me.

ANTONIO. Come, then; there is a friar of a neighboring convent is my friend. You have already been diverted by the manners of a nunnery; let us see whether there is less hypocrisy among the holy fathers.

LOUISA. I'm afraid not, Antonio; for in religion, as in friendship, they who profess most are ever the least sincere.

Exeunt

Enter CLARA

CLARA. So! yonder they go, as happy as a mutual and confessed affection can make them, while I am left in solitude. Heigho! love may perhaps excuse the rashness of an elopement from[1] one's friend, but I am sure nothing but the presence of the man we love can support it.—Ha! what do I see! Ferdinand, as I live! How could he gain admission?—by potent gold, I suppose, as Antonio did.—How eager and disturbed he seems!—He shall not know me as yet.

(*Lets down her veil*)

Enter FERDINAND

FERDINAND. Yes, those were certainly they; my information was right. (*Going*)

CLARA. (*Stops him*) Pray, signor, what is your business here?

FERDINAND. No matter—no matter.—Oh, they stop—(*Looks out*) Yes, that is the perfidious Clara indeed!

CLARA. (*Aside*) So, a jealous error. I'm glad to see him so moved.

FERDINAND. Her disguise can't conceal her.—No, no, I know her too well.

CLARA. Wonderful discernment!—But, signor—

FERDINAND. Be quiet, good nun; don't tease me.—By heavens, she leans upon his arm, hangs fondly on it! O woman! woman!

CLARA. But, signor, who is it you want?

FERDINAND. Not you, not you; so, prithee, don't tease me. Yet pray, stay—gentle nun, was it not Donna Clara d'Almanza just parted from you?

CLARA. Clara d'Almanza, signor, is not yet out of the garden.

FERDINAND. Aye, aye, I knew I was right.—And pray is not that gentleman, now at the porch with her, Antonio d'Ercilla?

CLARA. It is indeed, signor.

FERDINAND. So, so; now but one question more—can you inform me for what purpose they have gone away?

CLARA. They are gone to be married, I believe.

FERDINAND. Very well—enough; now if I don't mar their wedding! *Exit*

CLARA. (*Unveils*) I thought jealousy had made lovers quick-sighted, but it has made mine blind. Louisa's story accounts to me for this error, and I am glad to find I have

1 Modern eds. "for."

power enough over him to make him so unhappy. But why should not I be present at his surprise when undeceived? When he's through the porch I'll follow him, and perhaps Louisa shall not singly be a bride.

[*Sings*]

SONG

Adieu, thou dreary pile, where never dies
The sullen echo of repentant sighs!
Ye sister mourners of each lonely cell,
Inured to hymns and sorrow, fare ye well!
For happier scenes I fly this darksome grove,
To saints a prison, but a tomb to love!

Exit

SCENE IV. *A court before the priory*

Enter ISAAC, *crossing the stage*

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO. What, my friend Isaac!

ISAAC. What, Antonio! wish me joy! I have Louisa safe.

ANTONIO. Have you? I wish you joy with all my soul.

ISAAC. Yes, I am come here to procure a priest to marry us.

ANTONIO. So! then we are both on the same errand; I am come to look for Father Paul.

ISAAC. Hah! I am glad on't. But, i'faith, he must tack me first; my love is waiting.

ANTONIO. So is mine; I left her in the porch.

ISAAC. Aye, but I am in haste to get back to Don Jerome.

ANTONIO. And so am I too.

ISAAC. Well, perhaps he'll save time and marry us both together—or I'll be your father, and you shall be mine. Come along! But you're obliged to me for all this.

ANTONIO. Yes, yes. *Exeunt*

SCENE V. *A room in the priory.*—Friars *at the table, drinking*

GLEE AND CHORUS

This bottle's the sun of our table,
His beams are rosy wine;
We, planets that are not able
Without his help to shine.
Let mirth and glee abound!
You'll soon grow bright
With borrowed light,
And shine as he goes round.

PAUL. Brother Francis, toss the bottle about and give me your toast.

FRANCIS. Have we drunk[1] the abbess of St. Ursuline?

PAUL. Yes, yes; she was the last.

FRANCIS. Then I'll give you the blue-eyed nun of St. Catherine's.

PAUL. With all my heart. (*Drinks*)—Pray, brother Augustine, were there any benefactions left in my absence?

FRANCIS. Don Juan Corduba has left a hundred ducats to remember him in our masses.

PAUL. Has he? let them be paid to our wine merchant, and we'll remember him in our cups, which will do just as well. Anything more?

AUGUSTINE. Yes; Baptista, the rich miser, who died last week, has bequeathed us a thousand pistoles, and the silver lamp he used in his own chamber to burn before the image of St. Anthony.

PAUL. 'Twas well meant, but we'll employ his money better. Baptista's bounty shall light the living, not the dead. St. Anthony is not afraid to be left in the dark, tho' he was.—(*A knocking*) See who's there.

(FRANCIS *goes to the door, and opens it*)

Enter Porter

PORTER. Here's one without in pressing haste to speak with Father Paul.

FRANCIS. Brother Paul!

(PAUL *comes from behind a curtain, with a glass of wine, and in his hand a piece of cake*)

PAUL. Here! how durst you, fellow, thus abruptly break in upon our devotions?

PORTER. I thought they were finished.

PAUL. No, they were not—were they, Brother Francis?

FRANCIS. Not by a bottle each.

[1] Q1 *drank*, still a common error for "drunk."

PAUL. But neither you nor[1] your fellows mark how the hours go—no, you mind nothing but the gratifying of your appetites; ye eat and swill, and sleep, and gormandize, and thrive, while we are wasting in mortification.

PORTER. We ask no more than nature craves.

PAUL. 'Tis false, ye have more appetites than hairs! and your flushed, sleek, and pampered appearance is the disgrace of our Order. Out on't! If you are hungry, can't you be content with the wholesome roots of the earth; and if you are dry, isn't there the crystal spring? (*Drinks*) Put this away, (*Gives a glass*) and show me where I'm wanted. (Porter *draws the glass.*—PAUL, *going, turns*) So you would have drunk[2] it if there had been any left! Ah, glutton! glutton! *Exeunt*

SCENE VI. *The court before the priory*

Enter ISAAC *and* ANTONIO

ISAAC. A plaguy while coming, this same Father Paul.—He's detained at vespers, I suppose, poor fellow.

ANTONIO. No, here he comes.

Enter PAUL

—Good Father Paul, I crave your blessing.

ISAAC. Yes, good Father Paul, we are come to beg a favor.

PAUL. What is it, pray?

ISAAC. To marry us, good Father Paul; and in truth thou dost look the very priest of Hymen.

PAUL. In short, I may be called so, for I deal in repentance and mortification.

ISAAC. No, no, thou seem'st an officer of Hymen, because thy presence speaks content and good humor.

PAUL. Alas! my appearance is deceitful.—Bloated I am, indeed! for fasting is a windy recreation, and it hath swoln me like a bladder.

ANTONIO. But thou hast a good fresh color in thy face, father—rosy, i'faith.

PAUL. Yes, I have blushed for mankind till the hue of my shame is as fixed as their vices.

ISAAC. Good man!

PAUL. And I have labored too, but to what purpose? they continue to sin under my very nose.

ISAAC. Efecks, father, I should have guessed as much, for your nose seems to be put to the blush more than any other part of your face.

PAUL. Go, you're a wag.

ANTONIO. But, to the purpose, father; will you officiate for us?

PAUL. To join young people thus clandestinely is not safe; and, indeed, I have in my heart many weighty reasons against it.

ANTONIO. And I have in my hand many weighty reasons for it. Isaac, haven't you an argument or two in our favor about you?

ISAAC. Yes, yes; here is a most unanswerable purse.

PAUL. For shame! you make me angry: you forget that I am a Jacobin, and when importunate people have forced their trash—aye, into this pocket, here—or into this—why, then, the sin was theirs. (*They put money into his pockets*)—Fie, now, how you distress me! I would return it, but that I must touch it that way and so wrong my oath.

ANTONIO. Now then, come with us.

ISAAC. Aye, now give us your title to joy and rapture.

PAUL. Well, when your hour of repentance comes, don't blame me.

ANTONIO. (*Aside*) No bad caution to my friend Isaac.—Well, well, father, do you do your part, and I'll abide the consequence.

ISAAC. Aye, and so will I.

(*They are going*)

Enter LOUISA, *running*

LOUISA. O Antonio, Ferdinand is at the porch, and inquiring for us. [*Exit*]

ISAAC. Who? Don Ferdinand? He's not inquiring for me, I hope.

ANTONIO. Fear not, my love; I'll soon pacify him.

[1] Q1 *or*. [2] See note above.

ISAAC. Egad, you won't.—Antonio, take my advice and run away. This Ferdinand is the most unmerciful dog, and has the cursedest long sword!—and upon my soul, he comes on purpose to cut your throat.

ANTONIO. Never fear—never fear.

ISAAC. Well, you may stay if you will, but I'll get someone to marry me; for, by St. Iago, he shall never marry me again while I am master of a pair of heels.

(*Runs out*)

Enter FERDINAND *and* LOUISA

FERDINAND. So, sir, I have met with you at last!

ANTONIO. Well, sir.

FERDINAND. Base, treacherous man! whence can a false, deceitful soul like yours borrow confidence to look so steadily on the man you've injured?

ANTONIO. Ferdinand, you are too warm. 'Tis true, you find me on the point of wedding one I love beyond my life, but no argument of mine prevailed on her to elope. I scorn deceit as much as you.—By heaven, I knew not she had left her father's till I saw her.

FERDINAND. What a mean excuse! You have wronged your friend, then, for one whose wanton forwardness anticipated your treachery—of this, indeed, your Jew pander informed me; but let your conduct be consistent, and since you have dared to do a wrong, follow me and show you have a spirit to avow it.

LOUISA. Antonio, I perceive his mistake; leave him to me.

PAUL. Friend, you are rude, to interrupt the union of two willing hearts.

FERDINAND. No, meddling priest, the hand he seeks is mine.

Enter CLARA, *behind*

PAUL. If so, I'll proceed no further. Lady, did you ever promise this youth your hand? (*To* LOUISA, *who shakes her head*)

FERDINAND. Clara, I thank you for your silence. I would not have heard your tongue avow such falsity; be't your punishment to remember I have not reproached you. Antonio, you are protected now, but we shall meet.

(*Going.* CLARA *holds one arm and* LOUISA *the other.* [*They sing*])

DUET

LOUISA. Turn thee round, I pray thee,
Calm awhile thy rage.
CLARA. I must help to stay thee,
And thy wrath assuage.

LOUISA. Couldst thou not discover
One so dear to thee?
CLARA. Canst thou be a lover,
And thus fly from me?

(*Both unveil*)

FERDINAND. How's this! my sister? Clara too—I'm confounded!

LOUISA. 'Tis even so, good brother.

PAUL. How! what impiety! Did the man want to marry his own sister?

LOUISA. And aren't you ashamed of yourself not to know your own sister?

CLARA. To drive away your own mistress—

LOUISA. Don't you see how Jealousy blinds people?

CLARA. Aye, and will you ever be jealous again?

FERDINAND. Never—never—you, sister, I know, will forgive me; but now, Clara, shall I presume—

CLARA. No, no, just now you told me not to tease you.—"Who do you want, good signor?" "Not you, not you." Oh, you blind wretch! but swear never to be jealous again and I'll forgive you.

FERDINAND. By all—

CLARA. There, that will do—you'll keep the oath just as well. (*Gives her hand*)

LOUISA. But, brother, here is one to whom some apology is due.

FERDINAND. Antonio, I am ashamed to think—

ANTONIO. Not a word of excuse, Ferdinand. I have not been in love myself without learning that a lover's anger should never be resented; but come, let us retire with this good father, and we'll explain to you the cause of this error.

GLEE AND CHORUS

Oft does Hymen smile to hear
  Wordy vows of feigned regard;
Well he knows when they're sincere,
  Never slow to give reward:
For his glory is to prove
Kind to those who wed for love.

Exeunt

SCENE VII. *A grand saloon*

Enter DON JEROME, Servants, *and* LOPEZ

JEROME. Be sure now, let everything be in the best order; let all my servants have on their merriest faces, but tell them to get as little drunk as possible till after supper.—So, Lopez, where's your master? sha'n't we have him at supper?

LOPEZ. Indeed, I believe not, sir. He's mad, I doubt; I'm sure he has frighted me from him.

JEROME. Aye, aye, he's after some wench, I suppose—a young rake! Well, well, we'll be merry without him.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir, here is Signor Isaac.

Enter ISAAC

JEROME. So! my dear son-in-law—there, take my blessing and forgiveness.—But where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

ISAAC. She's without, impatient for a blessing, but almost afraid to enter.

JEROME. Oh, fly and bring her in.

Exit ISAAC

—Poor girl, I long to see her pretty face.

ISAAC. (*Without*) Come, my charmer! my trembling angel!

Enter ISAAC *and* DUENNA. DON JEROME *runs to meet them; she kneels*

JEROME. Come to my arms, my—(*Starts back*) Why, who the devil have we here?

ISAAC. Nay, Don Jerome, you promised her forgiveness; see how the dear creature droops!

JEROME. Droops, indeed! Why, gad take me, this is old Margaret! But where's my daughter—where's Louisa?

ISAAC. Why, here, before your eyes!—Nay, don't be abashed, my sweet wife!

JEROME. Wife with a vengeance! Why, zounds, you have not married the Duenna!

DUENNA. (*Kneeling*) O dear papa! you'll not disown me, sure!

JEROME. Papa! "dear papa!" Why, zounds, your impudence is as great as your ugliness!

ISAAC. Rise, my charmer; go, throw your snowy arms about his neck, and convince him you are—

DUENNA. Oh, sir, forgive me!

(*Embraces him*)

JEROME. Help! murder!

SERVANTS. What's the matter, sir?

JEROME. Why, here, this damned Jew has brought an old harridan to strangle me!

ISAAC. Lord, it is his own daughter, and he is so hard-hearted he won't forgive her.

Enter ANTONIO *and* LOUISA; *they kneel*

JEROME. Zounds and fury! what's here now? Who sent for you, sir, and who the devil are you?

ANTONIO. This lady's husband, sir.

ISAAC. Aye, that he is, I'll be sworn, for I left 'em with the priest and was to have given her away.

JEROME. You were?

ISAAC. Aye; that's my honest friend, Antonio, and that's the little girl I told you I had hampered him with.

JEROME. Why, you are either drunk or mad—this is my daughter.

ISAAC. No, no! 'tis you are both drunk and mad, I think—here's your daughter.

JEROME. Hark ye, old Iniquity, will you explain all this, or not?

DUENNA. Come then, Don Jerome, I will—tho' our habits might inform you all; look on your daughter there, and on me.

ISAAC. What's this I hear?

DUENNA. The truth is that in your passion this morning you made a small mistake,

for you turned your daughter out of doors and locked up your humble servant.

ISAAC. O lud! O lud! here's a pretty fellow, to turn his daughter out of doors, instead of an old duenna.

JEROME. And, O lud! O lud! here's a pretty fellow, to marry an old duenna instead of my daughter. But how came the rest about?

DUENNA. I have only to add that I remained in your daughter's place and had the good fortune to engage the affections of my sweet husband here.

ISAAC. Her husband! why, you old witch, do you think I'll be your husband now? This is a trick, a cheat, and you ought all to be ashamed of yourselves.

ANTONIO. Hark ye, Isaac, do you dare to complain of tricking?—Don Jerome, I give you my word, this cunning Portuguese has brought all this upon himself, by endeavoring to overreach you by getting your daughter's fortune without making any settlement in return.

JEROME. Overreach me!

LOUISA. 'Tis so, indeed, sir, and we can prove it to you.

JEROME. Why, gad take me, it must be so, or he could never have put up with such a face as Margaret's! So, little Solomon, I wish you joy of your wife, with all my soul.

LOUISA. Isaac, tricking is all fair in love —let you alone for the plot.

ANTONIO. A cunning dog, aren't you? A sly little villain, heh?

LOUISA. Roguish, perhaps; but keen, devilish keen!

JEROME. Yes, yes; his aunt always called him little Solomon.

ISAAC. Why, the plagues of Egypt upon you all!—But do you think I'll submit to such an imposition?

ANTONIO. Isaac, one serious word: you'd better be content as you are; for believe me, you will find that in the opinion of the world there is not a fairer subject for contempt and ridicule than a knave become the dupe of his own art.

ISAAC. I don't care—I'll not endure this! Don Jerome, 'tis you have done this—you would be so cursed positive about the beauty of her you locked up, and all the time I told you she was as old as my mother and as ugly as the devil.

DUENNA. Why, you little insignificant reptile!

JEROME. That's right—attack him, Margaret.

DUENNA. Dare such a thing as you pretend to talk of beauty?—a walking rouleau! —a body that seems to owe all its consequence to the dropsy!—a pair of eyes like two dead beetles in a wad of brown dough! —a beard like an artichoke, with dry, shrivelled jaws that would disgrace the mummy of a monkey!

JEROME. Well done, Margaret!

DUENNA. But you shall know that I have a brother who wears a sword—and if you don't do me justice—

ISAAC. Fire seize your brother, and you too! I'll fly to Jerusalem to avoid you!

DUENNA. Fly where you will, I'll follow you.

JEROME. Throw your snowy arms about him, Margaret.

Exeunt ISAAC *and* DUENNA —But, Louisa, are you really married to this modest gentleman?

LOUISA. Sir, in obedience to your commands, I gave him my hand within this hour.

JEROME. My commands!

ANTONIO. Yes, sir; here is your consent, under your own hand.

JEROME. How! would you rob me of my child by a trick, a false pretence? and do you think to get her fortune by the same means? Why, 'slife, you are as great a rogue as Isaac!

ANTONIO. No, Don Jerome; tho' I have profited by this paper in gaining your daughter's hand, I scorn to obtain her fortune by deceit. There, sir. (*Gives a letter*) Now give her your blessing for a dower, and all the little I possess shall be settled on her in return. Had you wedded her to a prince, he could do no more.

JEROME. Why, gad take me, but you are a very extraordinary fellow! But have you

the impudence to suppose no one can do a generous action but yourself? Here, Louisa, tell this proud fool of yours that he's the only man I know that would renounce your fortune—and by my soul, he's the only man in Spain that's worthy of it!—There, bless you both. I'm an obstinate old fellow when I'm in the wrong, but you shall now find me as steady in the right.

Enter FERDINAND *and* CLARA

—Another wonder still!—Why, sirrah! Ferdinand, you have not stole a nun, have you?

FERDINAND. She is a nun in nothing but her habit, sir; look nearer, and you will perceive 'tis Clara d'Almanza, Don Guzman's daughter—and, with pardon for stealing a wedding, she is also my wife.

JEROME. Gadsbud, and a great fortune.—Ferdinand, you are a prudent young rogue, and I forgive you; and, ifecks, you are a pretty little damsel. Give your father-in-law a kiss, you smiling rogue.

CLARA. —There, old gentleman; and now mind you behave well to us.

JEROME. Ifecks, those lips ha'n't been chilled by kissing beads!—Egad, I believe I shall grow the best-humored fellow in Spain. —Lewis! Sancho! Carlos! d'ye hear? are all my doors thrown open? Our children's weddings are the only holidays our age can boast; and then we drain, with pleasure, the little stock of spirits time has left us. (*Music within*) But see, here come our friends and neighbors!

Enter Masqueraders

And i'faith, we'll make a night on't, with wine, and dance, and catches; then old and young shall join us.

FINALE

JEROME. Come now for jest and smiling,
Both old and young beguiling,
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

LOUISA. Thus crowned with dance and song,
The hours shall glide along,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees
Can never fail to please.

FERDINAND. Each bride with blushes glowing,
Our wine as rosy flowing,
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

ANTONIO. Then healths to every friend,
The night's repast shall end,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees
Can never fail to please.

CLARA. Nor, while we are so joyous,
Shall anxious fear annoy us;
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

JEROME. For generous guests like these
Accept the wish to please:
So we'll laugh and play, so blithe and gay;
Your smiles drive care away. *Exeunt*

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

A Comedy by Richard Brinsley Sheridan

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

As originally acted at Drury-Lane Theatre, May 8, 1777

Sir Peter Teazle	Snake
Sir Oliver Surface	Careless
Joseph Surface	Sir Harry Bumper
Charles [Surface]	
Crabtree	Lady Teazle
Sir Benjamin Backbite	Maria
Rowley	Lady Sneerwell
Moses	Mrs. Candour
Trip	

[Gentlemen, Maid, and Servants]

Scene: *London*

[Time: *Contemporary*]

A PORTRAIT

Addressed to Mrs. Crewe, with the Comedy of The School for Scandal

By R. B. Sheridan, Esq.

Tell me, ye prim adepts in Scandal's school,
Who rail by precept and detract by rule,
Lives there no character so tried, so known,
So decked with grace, and so unlike your own,
That even you assist her fame to raise,
Approve by envy, and by silence praise!
Attend!—a model shall attract your view—
Daughters of calumny, I summon you!
You shall decide if this a portrait prove,
Or fond creation of the Muse and Love.
Attend, ye virgin critics, shrewd and sage,
Ye matron censors of this childish age,
Whose peering eye and wrinkled front declare
A fixed antipathy to young and fair;
By cunning, cautious; or by nature, cold,
In maiden madness, virulently bold!—
Attend, ye skilled to coin the precious tale,
Creating proof, where innuendoes fail!
Whose practised memories, cruelly exact,
Omit no circumstance, except the fact!—
Attend, all ye who boast—or old or young—
The living libel of a slanderous tongue!
So shall my theme as far contrasted be
As saints by fiends, or hymns by calumny.
Come, gentle Amoret[1] (for 'neath that name
In worthier verse is sung thy beauty's fame);
Come—for but thee who seeks the Muse?
—and while
Celestial blushes check thy conscious smile,
With timid grace and hesitating eye,
The perfect model, which I boast, supply:
Vain Muse! couldst thou the humblest sketch create
Of her, or slightest charm couldst imitate—
Could thy blest strain in kindred colors trace
The faintest wonder of her form and face—
Poets would study the immortal line,
And Reynolds own *his* art subdued by thine;
That art, which well might added lustre give
To Nature's best, and Heaven's superlative:
On Granby's[2] cheek might bid new glories rise,
Or point a purer beam from Devon's[3] eyes!
Hard is the task to shape that beauty's praise,
Whose judgment scorns the homage flattery pays!
But praising Amoret we cannot err,
No tongue o'ervalues Heaven or flatters her!
Yet she by Fate's perverseness—she alone—
Would doubt our truth, nor deem such praise her own.

1 In Spenser, but used contemporaneously in Fox's verses for Mrs. Crewe.
2 Marchioness of Granby.
3 Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire.

Adorning fashion, unadorned by dress,
Simple from taste, and not from carelessness;
Discreet in gesture, in deportment mild,
Not stiff with prudence, nor uncouthly wild:
No state has Amoret; no studied mien;
She frowns no *goddess,* and she moves no *queen.*
The softer charm that in her manner lies
Is framed to captivate, yet not surprise;
It justly suits the expression of her face;
'Tis less than dignity and more than grace!
On her pure cheek the native hue is such
That, formed by Heaven to be admired so much,
The hand divine, with a less partial care,
Might well have fixed a fairer crimson there
And bade the gentle inmate of her breast—
Inshrinèd Modesty—supply the rest.
But who the peril of her lips shall paint?
Strip them of smiles—still, still all words are faint,
But moving Love himself appears to teach
Their action, though denied to rule her speech;
And thou who seest her speak and dost not hear,
Mourn not her distant accents 'scape thine ear;
Viewing those lips, thou still may'st make pretence
To judge of what she says and swear 'tis sense:
Clothed with such grace, with such expression fraught,
They move in reasoning and they pause in thought!
But dost thou further watch, with charmed surprise,
The mild irresolution of her eyes,
Curious to mark how frequent they repose
In brief eclipse and momentary close—
Ah! seest thou not an ambushed Cupid there,
Too timorous of his charge, with jealous care
Veils and unveils those beams of heav'nly light,
Too full, too fatal else, for mortal sight?
Nor yet such pleasing vengeance fond to meet,
In pout'ning dimples hope a safe retreat.

What though her peaceful breast should ne'er allow
Subduing frowns to arm her altered brow,
By Love, I swear, and by his gentle wiles,
More fatal still the mercy of her smiles!
Thus lovely, thus adorned, possessing all
Of bright or fair that can to woman fall,
The height of vanity might well be thought
Prerogative in her, and Nature's fault.
Yet gentle Amoret, in mind supreme
As well as charms, rejects the vainer theme;
And, half mistrustful of her beauty's store,
She barbs with wit those darts too keen before:—
Read in all knowledge that her sex should reach,
Though Greville,[1] or the Muse, should deign to teach,
Fond to improve, nor timorous to discern
How far it is a woman's grace to learn;
In Millar's dialect she would not prove
Apollo's priestess, but Apollo's love;
Graced by those signs which truth delights to own—
The timid blush and mild submitted tone:
Whate'er she says, though sense appear throughout,
Displays the tender hue of female doubt;
Decked with that charm, how lovely wit appears,
How graceful science when that robe she wears!
Such too her talents and her bent of mind,
As speak a sprightly heart by thought refined;
A taste for mirth, by contemplation schooled,
A turn for ridicule, by candor ruled,
A scorn of folly, which she tries to hide;
An awe of talent, which she owns with pride!
Peace, idle Muse! no more thy strain prolong,
But yield a theme thy warmest praises wrong;
Just to her merit, though thou canst not raise
Thy feeble verse, behold th'acknowledged praise
Has spread conviction through the envious train,
And cast a fatal gloom o'er Scandal's reign!

[1] See note on *The Critic*, p. 851.

And lo! each pallid hag, with blistered tongue,
Mutters assent to all thy zeal has sung—
Owns all the colors just—the outline true,
Thee my inspirer and my model—CREWE!

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK

A School for Scandal! tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?
No need of lessons now, the knowing think;
We might as well be taught to eat and drink.
Caused by a dearth of scandal, should the vapors[1]
Distress our fair ones—let them read the papers;
Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit,
Crave what you will—there's *quantum sufficit.*[2]
"Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood (who loves tattle,
And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),
Just ris'n at noon, all night at cards when threshing
Strong tea and scandal—"Bless me, how refreshing!
Give me the papers, Lisp—how bold and free! (*Sips*)
Last night Lord L. (*Sips*) *was caught with Lady D.*
For aching heads what charming sal volatile! (*Sips*)
If Mrs. B. will still continue flirting,
We hope she'll DRAW, *or we'll* UNDRAW *the curtain.*
Fine satire, poz[3]—in public all abuse it,
But, by ourselves (*Sips*), our praise we can't refuse it.
Now, Lisp, read you—there, at that dash and star."
"Yes, ma'am: *A certain lord had best beware,*
Who lives not twenty miles from Grosvenor Square;
For, should he Lady W. find willing,
Wormwood is bitter"—"Oh! that's me! the villain!
Throw it behind the fire, and never more
Let that vile paper come within my door."
Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart;
To reach our feelings, we ourselves must smart.
Is our young bard so young, to think that he
Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
So strong, so swift, the monster there's no gagging:
Cut Scandal's head off, still the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your smiles once lavishly bestowed,
Again our young Don Quixote takes the road;
To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
And seeks this hydra, Scandal, in his den.
For your applause all perils he would through—
He'll fight—that's write—a cavalliero true,
Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is spilt for you.

1 the blues. 2 a sufficient quantity. 3 positively.

ACT I

SCENE I. LADY SNEERWELL'S *house*

Discovered, LADY SNEERWELL *at her dressing-table;* SNAKE *drinking chocolate*

LADY SNEERWELL. The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted?

SNAKE. They were, madam; and, as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

LADY SNEERWELL. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

SNAKE. That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four-and-twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

LADY SNEERWELL. Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

SNAKE. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my

knowledge, she has been the cause of six matches being broken off and three sons disinherited, of four forced elopements and as many close confinements, nine separate maintenances and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a tête-à-tête in the *Town and Country Magazine*, when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

LADY SNEERWELL. She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

SNAKE. 'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free tongue and a bold invention; but her coloring is too dark and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint and mellowness of sneer which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

LADY SNEERWELL. You are partial, Snake.

SNAKE. Not in the least; everybody allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or look than many can with the most labored detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

LADY SNEERWELL. Yes, my dear Snake; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own injured reputation.

SNAKE. Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

LADY SNEERWELL. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbor, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family?

SNAKE. I do. Here are two young men to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death—the eldest possessing the most amiable character and universally well spoken of; the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character: the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favorite; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface; and more so, why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

LADY SNEERWELL. Then, at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

SNAKE. No!

LADY SNEERWELL. His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune; but, finding in his brother a favored rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions and profit by my assistance.

SNAKE. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

LADY SNEERWELL. How dull you are! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have concealed even from you? Must I confess that Charles —that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation—that he it is for whom I'm thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice everything?

SNAKE. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent; but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

LADY SNEERWELL. For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious —in short, a sentimental knave—while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

SNAKE. Yes; yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England, and, above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

LADY SNEERWELL. True; and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy he has brought Sir Peter entirely into his interest with regard to Maria, while poor

Charles has no friend in the house—though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Mr. Surface.

LADY SNEERWELL. Show him up.

Exit Servant

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE

JOSEPH SURFACE. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day? Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

LADY SNEERWELL. Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment, but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us, and, believe me, the confidence is not ill placed.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

LADY SNEERWELL. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or, what is more material to me, your brother.

JOSEPH SURFACE. I have not seen either since I left you, but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

LADY SNEERWELL. Ah, my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you. But do your brother's distresses increase?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of.

LADY SNEERWELL. Poor Charles!

JOSEPH SURFACE. True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one can't help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves—

LADY SNEERWELL. O lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Egad, that's true! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

SNAKE. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming. I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, your very devoted.

Exit SNAKE

—Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any farther confidence in that fellow.

LADY SNEERWELL. Why so?

JOSEPH SURFACE. I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

LADY SNEERWELL. And do you think he would betray us?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Nothing more likely. Take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villainy.—Ah, Maria!

Enter MARIA

LADY SNEERWELL. Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

MARIA. Oh! there's that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out and ran hither to avoid them.

LADY SNEERWELL. Is that all?

JOSEPH SURFACE. If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

LADY SNEERWELL. Nay, now you are severe, for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard *you* were here.—But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you would avoid him so?

MARIA. Oh, he has done nothing—but 'tis for what he has said; his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Aye, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing

him; for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend, and his uncle's as bad.

LADY SNEERWELL. Nay, but we should make allowance; Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

MARIA. For my part, I confess, madam, wit loses its respect with me when I see it in company with malice. What do you think, Mr. Surface?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

LADY SNEERWELL. Pshaw! there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill nature. The malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

JOSEPH SURFACE. To be sure, madam; that conversation where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

MARIA. Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable, but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalship, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other, but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Re-enter Servant

SERVANT. Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

LADY SNEERWELL. Beg her to walk in.

Exit Servant

—Now, Maria, here is a character to your taste, for though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, everybody allows her to be the best-natured and best sort of woman.

MARIA. Yes, with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

JOSEPH SURFACE. I'faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell; whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

LADY SNEERWELL. Hush!—here she is!

Enter MRS. CANDOUR

MRS. CANDOUR. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century?—Mr. Surface, what news do you hear?—though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Just so, indeed, ma'am.

MRS. CANDOUR. Oh, Maria! child—what, is the whole affair off between you and Charles? His extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else.

MARIA. Indeed! I am very sorry, ma'am, the town is not better employed.

MRS. CANDOUR. True, true, child, but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn from the same quarter that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

MARIA. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

MRS. CANDOUR. Very true, child, but what's to be done? People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filigree Flirt. But, Lord! there's no minding what one hears—though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

MARIA. Such reports are highly scandalous.

MRS. CANDOUR. So they are, child—shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes. Lord, now who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill-nature of people, that they say her uncle stopped her last week, just as she was stepping into the York diligence with her dancing-master.

MARIA. I'll answer for't there are no grounds for that report.

MRS. CANDOUR. Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear; no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino—though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

JOSEPH SURFACE. The licence of invention some people take is monstrous, indeed.

MARIA. 'Tis so; but in my opinion those who report such things are equally culpable.

MRS. CANDOUR. To be sure they are; tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers—'tis an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? How will you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Sir H. Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation.—But Lord, do you think I would report these things! No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if everybody had your forbearance and good nature!

MRS. CANDOUR. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance, I own I always love to think the best. By-the-by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

JOSEPH SURFACE. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

MRS. CANDOUR. Ah! I heard so—but you must tell him to keep up his spirits: everybody almost is in the same way—Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, Captain Quinze, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so, if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Doubtless, ma'am—a very great one.

[*Re-*]*enter* Servant

SERVANT. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite. *Exit* Servant

LADY SNEERWELL. So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you: positively, you sha'n't escape.

Enter CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE

CRABTREE. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad, ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet too; isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, fie, uncle!

CRABTREE. Nay, egad, it's true; I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymer in the kingdom. Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire?—Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversazione. Come now; your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and—

SIR BENJAMIN. Uncle, now—prithee—

CRABTREE. I'faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at all these fine sort of things.

LADY SNEERWELL. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

SIR BENJAMIN. To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print; and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies which, when favored with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public.

(*Turning to* MARIA)

CRABTREE. (*To* MARIA) 'Fore Heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalise you!—you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.[1]

SIR BENJAMIN. Yes, madam, I think you will like them when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin. 'Fore Gad they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

1 Lady Dorothy Sydney.

CRABTREE. But, ladies, that's true—have you heard the news?

MRS. CANDOUR. What, sir, do you mean the report of—

CRABTREE. No, ma'am, that's not it.—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

MRS. CANDOUR. Impossible!

CRABTREE. Ask Sir Benjamin.

SIR BENJAMIN. 'Tis very true, ma'am; everything is fixed and the wedding liveries bespoke.

CRABTREE. Yes—and they do say there were pressing reasons for it.

LADY SNEERWELL. Why, I have heard something of this before.

MRS. CANDOUR. It can't be—and I wonder anyone should believe such a story of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

SIR BENJAMIN. O lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

MRS. CANDOUR. Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny, sickly reputation that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robuster characters of a hundred prudes.

SIR BENJAMIN. True, madam, there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

MRS. CANDOUR. Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

CRABTREE. That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am. Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge?[1]—Sir Benjamin, you remember it?

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, to be sure!—the most whimsical circumstance.

LADY SNEERWELL. How was it, pray?

CRABTREE. Why, one evening, at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country. Says a young lady in company, "I have known instances of it; for, Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins." "What!" cries the Lady Dowager Dundizzy (who you know is as deaf as a post), "has Miss Piper had twins?" This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 'twas the next morning everywhere reported and in a few days believed by the whole town, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl; and in less than a week there were some people who could name the father and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

LADY SNEERWELL. Strange, indeed!

CRABTREE. Matter of fact, I assure you. O lud! Mr. Surface, pray, is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

CRABTREE. He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe. Sad comfort, whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure, but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

SIR BENJAMIN. To be sure he may. For my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say, and, though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

CRABTREE. That's true, egad, nephew. If the Old Jewry[2] was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman; no man more popular there, 'fore Gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine, and that, whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

SIR BENJAMIN. Yet no man lives in greater splendor. They tell me, when he entertains

1 A watering place thirty miles from London.

2 A quarter near the Bank of England.

his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities, have a score of tradesmen waiting in the ante-chamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

JOSEPH SURFACE. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

MARIA. (*Aside*) Their malice is intolerable!—(*Aloud*) Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning; I'm not very well.

Exit MARIA

MRS. CANDOUR. Oh, dear! she changes color very much.

LADY SNEERWELL. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her; she may want your assistance.

MRS. CANDOUR. That I will, with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be!

Exit MRS. CANDOUR

LADY SNEERWELL. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

SIR BENJAMIN. The young lady's *penchant* is obvious.

CRABTREE. But, Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that; follow her and put her into good humor. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

SIR BENJAMIN. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you, but depend on't, your brother is utterly undone.

CRABTREE. O lud, aye! undone as ever man was!—can't raise a guinea.

SIR BENJAMIN. And everything sold, I'm told, that was movable.

CRABTREE. I have seen one that was at his house.—Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots.

SIR BENJAMIN. (*Going*) And I'm very sorry also to hear some bad stories against him.

CRABTREE. Oh, he has done many mean things, that's certain.

SIR BENJAMIN. (*Going*) But, however, as he's your brother—

CRABTREE. We'll tell you all another opportunity.

Exeunt CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN

LADY SNEERWELL. Ha! ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

JOSEPH SURFACE. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

LADY SNEERWELL. I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are and we shall have an opportunity of observing farther; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief and you shall study sentiment. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. [*A room in*] SIR PETER [TEAZLE'S] *house*

Enter SIR PETER

SIR PETER. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since. We tifted a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the fashion and the town with as ready a grace as if she never had seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune and contradicts all my humors; yet the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY

ROWLEY. Oh! Sir Peter, your servant; how is it with you, sir?

SIR PETER. Very bad, Master Rowley, very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

ROWLEY. What can have happened to trouble you since yesterday?

SIR PETER. A good question to a married man!

ROWLEY. Nay, I'm sure your lady, Sir Peter, can't be the cause of your uneasiness.

SIR PETER. Why, has anybody told you she was dead?

ROWLEY. Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

SIR PETER. But the fault is entirely hers, Master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest-tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper; and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

ROWLEY. Indeed!

SIR PETER. Aye; and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong. But Lady Sneerwell and the set she meets at her house encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband—meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

ROWLEY. You know, Sir Peter, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honored master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

SIR PETER. You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both till their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence; of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment and acts up to the *sentiments* he professes; but for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

ROWLEY. I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

SIR PETER. What! let me hear.

ROWLEY. Sir Oliver *is* arrived and at this moment in town.

SIR PETER. How! you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

ROWLEY. I did not, but his passage has been remarkably quick.

SIR PETER. Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis fifteen years since we met. We have had many a day together. But does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

ROWLEY. Most strictly. He means before it is known to make some trial of their dispositions.

SIR PETER. Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits—he shall have his way; but pray, does he know I am married?

ROWLEY. Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

SIR PETER. What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption! Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together, but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be soon at my house, though—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, Master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

ROWLEY. By no means.

SIR PETER. For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes; so I'd have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

ROWLEY. I understand you; but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

SIR PETER. Egad, and so we must—and that's impossible. Ah! Master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it. *Exeunt* 130

ACT II

SCENE I. [*A room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *house*]

Enter SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE

SIR PETER. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

LADY TEAZLE. Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in everything—and what's more I will, too. What! though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married. 10

SIR PETER. Very well, ma'am, very well; so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

LADY TEAZLE. Authority! No, to be sure. If you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me; I am sure you were old enough.

SIR PETER. Old enough!—aye, there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance! 21

LADY TEAZLE. My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

SIR PETER. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon[1] into a greenhouse, and give a *fête champêtre*[2] at Christmas. 31

LADY TEAZLE. And am I to blame, Sir Peter, because flowers are dear in cold weather? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure I wish it was spring all the year round and that roses grew under our feet.

SIR PETER. Oons! madam—if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you. 41

LADY TEAZLE. No, no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

SIR PETER. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style—the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side, your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted of your own working. 53

LADY TEAZLE. Oh, yes! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led—my daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lapdog. 59

SIR PETER. Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so indeed.

LADY TEAZLE. And then, you know, my evening amusements!—to draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; to play Pope Joan[3] with the curate; to read a sermon to my aunt; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

SIR PETER. I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; but now you must have your coach—vis-à-vis—and three powdered footmen before your chair; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a docked coach-horse. 78

LADY TEAZLE. No—I swear I never did that. I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

1 A concert hall.
2 An open-air entertainment.
3 A card game.

SIR PETER. This, madam, was your situation; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank—in short, I have made you my wife. 86

LADY TEAZLE. Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation, and that is—

SIR PETER. My widow, I suppose? 90

LADY TEAZLE. Hem! hem!

SIR PETER. I thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself; for, though your ill conduct may disturb my peace, it shall never break my heart, I promise you: however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

LADY TEAZLE. Then why will you endeavor to make yourself so disagreeable to me and thwart me in every little elegant expense? 100

SIR PETER. 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me?

LADY TEAZLE. Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me be out of the fashion? 105

SIR PETER. The fashion, indeed! what had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

LADY TEAZLE. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste. 111

SIR PETER. Aye—there again—taste! Zounds! madam, you had no taste when you married me!

LADY TEAZLE. That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter; and, after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, if we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's. 120

SIR PETER. Aye, there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance you have made there!

LADY TEAZLE. Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation. 126

SIR PETER. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance, for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves! Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hur[illegible] done less mischief than these u[illegible] forged tales, coiners of scandal, and [illegible] of reputation.

LADY TEAZLE. What, would you restrain the freedom of speech?

SIR PETER. Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society. 138

LADY TEAZLE. Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace. But I vow, I bear no malice against the people I abuse; when I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humor, and I take it for granted they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too. 146

SIR PETER. Well, well, I'll call in, just to look after my own character.

LADY TEAZLE. Then, indeed, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. So good-bye to ye. *Exit* [LADY TEAZLE]

SIR PETER. So—I have gained much by my intended expostulation! Yet with what a charming air she contradicts everything I say, and how pleasingly she shows her contempt for my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her, and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. *Exit* 161

SCENE II. [*A room*] *at* LADY SNEERWELL'S [*house*]

Enter LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, *and* JOSEPH SURFACE

LADY SNEERWELL. Nay, positively, we will hear it.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means. 4

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, plague on't, uncle! 'tis mere nonsense.

CRABTREE. No, no; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore! 8

SIR BENJAMIN. But ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You

[illegible]hat one day last week, as Lady [illegible]icle was taking the dust in Hyde [illegible] a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she [illegible]ed me to write some verses on her [illegible]onies; upon which, I took out my pocket-[illegible]ook, and in one moment produced the fol-[illegible]lowing: 17

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies:
To give them this title I'm sure can't be wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

CRABTREE. There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback too.

JOSEPH SURFACE. A very Phœbus, mounted—indeed, Sir Benjamin! 25

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, dear, sir! trifles—trifles.

Enter LADY TEAZLE *and* MARIA

MRS. CANDOUR. I must have a copy.

LADY SNEERWELL. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter? 30

LADY TEAZLE. I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

LADY SNEERWELL. Maria, my love, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface. 35

MARIA. I take very little pleasure in cards—however, I'll do as you please.

LADY TEAZLE. (*Aside*) I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came. 42

MRS. CANDOUR. Now, I'll die, but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

LADY TEAZLE. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour? 46

MRS. CANDOUR. They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermilion to be handsome.

LADY SNEERWELL. Oh, surely she is a pretty woman. 50

CRABTREE. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

MRS. CANDOUR. She has a charming fresh color. 54

LADY TEAZLE. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

MRS. CANDOUR. Oh, fie! I'll swear her color is natural; I have seen it come and go.

LADY TEAZLE. I dare swear you have, ma'am; it goes off at night and comes again in the morning. 61

SIR BENJAMIN. True, ma'am; it not only comes and goes, but what's more, egad, her maid can fetch and carry it!

MRS. CANDOUR. Ha! ha! ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely, now, her sister *is*, or *was*, very handsome. 67

CRABTREE. Who? Mrs. Evergreen? O Lord! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour!

MRS. CANDOUR. Now positively you wrong her; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost—and I don't think she looks more. 72

SIR BENJAMIN. Ah! there's no judging by her looks unless one could see her face.

LADY SNEERWELL. Well, well, if Mrs. Evergreen *does* take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre chalks her wrinkles.

SIR BENJAMIN. Nay now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill—but when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique. 88

CRABTREE. Ha! ha! ha! Well said, nephew!

MRS. CANDOUR. Ha! ha! ha! Well, you make me laugh; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper?

SIR BENJAMIN. Why, she has very pretty teeth. 95

LADY TEAZLE. Yes, and on that account, when she is neither speaking nor laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on ajar, as it were—thus. 100

(*Shows her teeth*)

MRS. CANDOUR. How can you be so ill-natured?

LADY TEAZLE. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to

conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's-box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise as it were—thus: "How do you do, madam? Yes, madam."

LADY SNEERWELL. Very well, Lady Teazle; I see you can be a little severe.

LADY TEAZLE. In defence of a friend, it is but justice.—But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE

SIR PETER. Ladies, your most obedient. —(*Aside*) Mercy on me, here is the whole set! a character dead at every word, I suppose.

MRS. CANDOUR. I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious—and Lady Teazle as bad as anyone.

SIR PETER. That must be very distressing to *you,* Mrs. Candour, I dare swear.

MRS. CANDOUR. Oh, they will allow good qualities to nobody—not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Pursy.

LADY TEAZLE. What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night?

MRS. CANDOUR. Nay, her bulk is her misfortune; and, when she takes so much pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

LADY SNEERWELL. That's very true, indeed.

LADY TEAZLE. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey; laces herself by pulleys; and often, in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's and puffing round the Ring[1] on a full trot.

MRS. CANDOUR. I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

SIR PETER. Yes, a good defence, truly.

MRS. CANDOUR. Truly, Lady Teazle is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

CRABTREE. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious—an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

MRS. CANDOUR. Positively you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and as for her person great allowance is to be made; for let me tell you, a woman labors under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl at six-and-thirty.

LADY SNEERWELL. Though surely, she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candlelight, it is not to be wondered at.

MRS. CANDOUR. True, and then as to her manner: upon my word, I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education; for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

SIR BENJAMIN. Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

SIR PETER. (*Aside*) Yes, damned good-natured! This their own relation! mercy on me!

MRS. CANDOUR. For my part, I own I cannot bear to hear a friend ill spoken of.

SIR PETER. No, to be sure!

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh! you are of a moral turn. Mrs. Candour and I can sit for an hour and hear Lady Stucco talk sentiment.

LADY TEAZLE. Nay, I vow Lady Stucco is very well with the dessert after dinner, for she's just like the French fruit one cracks for mottoes—made up of paint and proverb.

MRS. CANDOUR. Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend, and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle—and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

CRABTREE. Oh, to be sure! she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen; 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

SIR BENJAMIN. So she has, indeed—an Irish front—

CRABTREE. Caledonian locks—

SIR BENJAMIN. Dutch nose—

CRABTREE. Austrian lips—

SIR BENJAMIN. Complexion of a Spaniard—

CRABTREE. And teeth *à la Chinoise*—

1 The Hyde Park drive, where carriages could pass in opposite directions about a circular lawn.

SIR BENJAMIN. In short, her face resembles a table d'hôte at Spa,[1] where no two guests are of a nation—

CRABTREE. Or a congress at the close of a general war—wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

MRS. CANDOUR. Ha! ha! ha!

SIR PETER. (*Aside*) Mercy on my life!—a person they dine with twice a week!

LADY SNEERWELL. Go, go; you are a couple of provoking toads.

MRS. CANDOUR. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for give me leave to say that Mrs. Ogle—

SIR PETER. Madam, madam, I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

LADY SNEERWELL. Ha! ha! ha! well said, Sir Peter! but you are a cruel creature—too phlegmatic yourself for a jest and too peevish to allow wit in others.

SIR PETER. Ah, madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good nature than your ladyship is aware of.

LADY TEAZLE. True, Sir Peter; I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

SIR BENJAMIN. Or rather, madam, suppose them to be man and wife, because one seldom sees them together.

LADY TEAZLE. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by Parliament.

SIR PETER. 'Fore Heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

LADY SNEERWELL. O lud! Sir Peter; would you deprive us of our privileges?

SIR PETER. Aye, madam, and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

LADY SNEERWELL. Go, you monster!

MRS. CANDOUR. But surely you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear?

SIR PETER. Yes, madam, I would have law merchant[2] for them too; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.

CRABTREE. Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

SIR PETER. Oh, nine out of ten of the malicious inventions are founded on some ridiculous misrepresentation.

LADY SNEERWELL. Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room?

Enter Servant, *who whispers* SIR PETER

SIR PETER. I'll be with them directly.

Exit Servant

—(*Aside*) I'll get away unperceived.

LADY SNEERWELL. Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us?

SIR PETER. Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me.

Exit SIR PETER

SIR BENJAMIN. Well—certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being. I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily if he were not your husband.

LADY TEAZLE. Oh, pray don't mind that; come, do let's hear them.

(*Joins the rest of the company going into the next room*)

JOSEPH SURFACE. Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

MARIA. How is it possible I should? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us be the province of wit or humor, Heaven grant me a double portion of dulness!

1 A Belgian watering place.

2 commercial law.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are; they have no malice at heart.

MARIA. Then is their conduct still more contemptible, for in my opinion nothing could excuse the interference of their tongues but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Undoubtedly, madam, and it has always been a sentiment of mine that to propagate a malicious truth wantonly is more despicable than to falsify from revenge. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others and be unkind to me alone? Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

MARIA. Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus and oppose your guardian Sir Peter's will but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favored rival.

MARIA. Ungenerously urged! But whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Nay, but, Maria, do not leave me with a frown; by all that's honest, I swear—

[*Re-enter* LADY TEAZLE *behind*]

—(*Aside*) Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle. —(*Aloud to* MARIA) You must not—no, you shall not—for though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle—

MARIA. Lady Teazle!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yet were Sir Peter to suspect—

Enter LADY TEAZLE *and comes forward*

LADY TEAZLE. What is this, pray? Do you take her for me?—Child, you are wanted in the next room.

Exit MARIA

—What is all this, pray?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, the most unlucky circumstance in nature! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavoring to reason with her when you came in.

LADY TEAZLE. Indeed! but you seemed to adopt a very tender mode of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast— But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised?

LADY TEAZLE. No, no! I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

JOSEPH SURFACE. True—a mere Platonic cicisbeo[1]—what every wife is entitled to.

LADY TEAZLE. Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so much of my country prejudices left that though Sir Peter's ill humor may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to—

JOSEPH SURFACE. The only revenge in your power. Well, I applaud your moderation.

LADY TEAZLE. Go—you are an insinuating wretch! But we shall be missed—let us join the company.

JOSEPH SURFACE. But we had best not return together.

LADY TEAZLE. Well, don't stay; for Maria sha'n't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you.

Exit LADY TEAZLE

JOSEPH SURFACE. A curious dilemma my politics have run me into! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many cursed rogueries that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. *Exit*

1 The recognized gallant of a married woman.

SCENE III. [*A room in*] SIR PETER TEAZLE'S [*house*]

Enter ROWLEY *and* SIR OLIVER SURFACE

SIR OLIVER. Ha! ha! ha! so my old friend is married, hey?—a young wife out of the country. Ha! ha! ha! that he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long and sink into a husband at last!

ROWLEY. But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver; 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

SIR OLIVER. Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance!—Poor Peter! But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him, hey?

ROWLEY. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle, which he has industriously been led into by a scandalous society in the neighborhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favorite.

SIR OLIVER. Aye, I know there are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it. But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you! No, no; if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

ROWLEY. Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir, it gives me new life to find that *your* heart is not turned against him, and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

SIR OLIVER. What! shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself? Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths, and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was.

ROWLEY. Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family. But here comes Sir Peter.

SIR OLIVER. Egad, so he does! Mercy on me! he's greatly altered, and seems to have a settled married look! One may read "husband" in his face at this distance!

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE

SIR PETER. Ha! Sir Oliver—my old friend! Welcome to England a thousand times!

SIR OLIVER. Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter! and i'faith, I am glad to find you well, believe me!

SIR PETER. Oh! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

SIR OLIVER. Aye, I have had my share. But, what! I find you are married—hey? Well, well, it can't be helped, and so—I wish you joy with all my heart!

SIR PETER. Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have entered into—the happy state; but we'll not talk of that now.

SIR OLIVER. True, true, Sir Peter; old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting—no, no, no.

ROWLEY. (*Aside to* SIR OLIVER) Take care, pray, sir.

SIR OLIVER. Well, so one of my nephews is a wild fellow, hey?

SIR PETER. Wild! Ah! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be. Everybody in the world speaks well of him.

SIR OLIVER. I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. —Everybody speaks well of him! Pshaw! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

SIR PETER. What, Sir Oliver! do you blame him for not making enemies?

SIR OLIVER. Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

SIR PETER. Well, well—you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification

to hear him converse; he professes the noblest sentiments. 93

SIR OLIVER. Oh, plague of his sentiments! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly. But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors, but before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts, and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose. 102

ROWLEY. And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

SIR PETER. Oh, my life on Joseph's honor!

SIR OLIVER. Well—come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health and tell you our scheme. 108

SIR PETER. *Allons*,[1] then!

SIR OLIVER. And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life! I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little. For my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree! *Exeunt*

ACT III

SCENE I. [*A room in*] SIR PETER TEAZLE'S [*house*]

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, *and* ROWLEY

SIR PETER. Well then, we will see this fellow first and have our wine afterwards. But how is this, Master Rowley? I don't see the jet[2] of your scheme. 4

ROWLEY. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, who I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, to Mr. Surface and Charles. From the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do; and he is, at this time, endeavoring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley. 18

SIR OLIVER. Ah! he is my brother's son.

SIR PETER. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to—

ROWLEY. Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends; and as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least of the benevolence of their dispositions. And believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother one who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it, 32

> a heart to pity, and a hand
> Open as day for melting charity.[3]

SIR PETER. Pshaw! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either when he has nothing left to give? Well, well—make the trial if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine relative to Charles's affairs?

ROWLEY. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence. —This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done everything in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance. 46

SIR PETER. Pray, let us have him in.

ROWLEY. (*Apart to* Servant) Desire Mr. Moses to walk up stairs.

SIR PETER. But pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth? 51

ROWLEY. Oh, I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce him to remove some of your prejudices. 61

1 Let us go. 2 aim, intent. 3 *2 Henry IV*, IV, iv, 31–32.

SIR PETER. I have heard too much on that subject.

ROWLEY. Here comes the honest Israelite.

Enter MOSES

—This is Sir Oliver.

SIR OLIVER. Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

MOSES. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him, but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

SIR OLIVER. That was unlucky, truly, for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

MOSES. None at all; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

SIR OLIVER. Unfortunate, indeed! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

MOSES. Yes, he knows that. This very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him and will, I believe, advance him some money.

SIR PETER. What, one Charles has never had money from before?

MOSES. Yes—Mr. Premium of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

SIR PETER. Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me!—Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

MOSES. Not at all.

SIR PETER. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation; go with my friend Moses and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

SIR OLIVER. Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

SIR PETER. True, so you may.

ROWLEY. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure. However, Moses, you understand Sir Peter and will be faithful?

MOSES. You may depend upon me.—This is near the time I was to have gone.

SIR OLIVER. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses—But hold! I have forgot one thing; how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

MOSES. There's no need—the principal is Christian.

SIR OLIVER. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a moneylender?

SIR PETER. Not at all; 'twould not be out of character if you went in your coach.

MOSES. Not in the least.

SIR OLIVER. Well, but how must I talk? there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

SIR PETER. Oh, there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands.—Hey, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, that's a very great point.

SIR OLIVER. I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent on the loan, at least.

MOSES. If you ask him no more than that you'll be discovered immediately.

SIR OLIVER. Hey! what, the plague! how much then?

MOSES. That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent; but if you find him in great distress and want the moneys very bad, you may ask double.

SIR PETER. A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver.

SIR OLIVER. Truly, I think so—and not unprofitable.

MOSES. Then, you know, you haven't the moneys yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

SIR OLIVER. Oh! I borrow it of a friend, do I?

MOSES. And your friend is an unconscionable dog, but you can't help that.

SIR OLIVER. My friend an unconscionable dog, is he?

MOSES. Yes, and he himself has not the moneys by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

SIR OLIVER. He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

SIR PETER. I'faith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean—you'll soon be master of the trade. But, Moses, would not you have him run out a little against the Annuity Bill? That would be in character, I should think.

MOSES. Very much.

ROWLEY. And lament that a young man now must be at years of discretion before he is suffered to ruin himself?

MOSES. Aye, great pity!

SIR PETER. And abuse the public for allowing merit to an act whose only object is to snatch misfortune and imprudence from the rapacious gripe of usury, and give the minor a chance of inheriting his estate without being undone by coming into possession.

SIR OLIVER. So, so—Moses shall give me farther instructions as we go together.

SIR PETER. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

SIR OLIVER. Oh, never fear! my tutor appears so able that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner.

Exit SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES

SIR PETER. So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced. You are partial, Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

ROWLEY. No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

SIR PETER. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her.

Exit ROWLEY

I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph—I am determined I will do it; he will give me his opinion sincerely.

Enter MARIA

—So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

MARIA. No, sir; he was engaged.

SIR PETER. Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

MARIA. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely. You compel me to declare that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

SIR PETER. So—here's perverseness!—No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

MARIA. This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him; I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

SIR PETER. Well, well, pity him as much as you please, but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

MARIA. Never to his brother!

SIR PETER. Go, perverse and obstinate! But take care, madam: you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is; don't compel me to inform you of it.

MARIA. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute, but must cease to think you so when you would compel me to be miserable. *Exit* MARIA

SIR PETER. Was ever man so crossed as I am! everything conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight before her father, a hale and hearty man, died on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter.—But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good humor. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little!

Enter LADY TEAZLE

LADY TEAZLE. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It

is not using me well to be ill-humored when I am not by.

SIR PETER. Ah, Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humored at all times.

LADY TEAZLE. I am sure I wish I had, for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humored now and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

SIR PETER. Two hundred pounds! what, an't I to be in a good humor without paying for it? But speak to me thus and, i'faith, there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it, but seal me a bond for the repayment.

LADY TEAZLE. (*Offering her hand*) Oh, no —there—my note of hand will do as well.

SIR PETER. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement; I mean shortly to surprise you. But shall we always live thus, hey?

LADY TEAZLE. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

SIR PETER. Well—then let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

LADY TEAZLE. I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you. You look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth; and chuck me under the chin, you would, and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

SIR PETER. Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive —

LADY TEAZLE. Aye, so I was, and would always take your part when my acquaintance used to abuse you and turn you into ridicule.

SIR PETER. Indeed!

LADY TEAZLE. Aye, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you and said I didn't think you so ugly by any means and I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

SIR PETER. And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple—

LADY TEAZLE. And never differ again?

SIR PETER. No, never!—though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always began first.

LADY TEAZLE. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter; indeed, you always gave the provocation.

SIR PETER. Now see, my angel! take care —contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

LADY TEAZLE. Then don't you begin it, my love!

SIR PETER. There now! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

LADY TEAZLE. Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear—

SIR PETER. There! now you want to quarrel again.

LADY TEAZLE. No, I'm sure I don't, but if you will be so peevish—

SIR PETER. There now! who begins first?

LADY TEAZLE. Why, you, to be sure. I said nothing—but there's no bearing your temper.

SIR PETER. No, no, madam, the fault's in your own temper.

LADY TEAZLE. Aye, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

SIR PETER. Your cousin Sophy is a forward, impertinent gipsy.

LADY TEAZLE. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

SIR PETER. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me if ever I try to be friends with you any more!

LADY TEAZLE. So much the better.

SIR PETER. No, no, madam: 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you—a pert, rural coquette that had refused half the honest 'squires in the neighborhood.

LADY TEAZLE. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor

who was single at fifty only because he never could meet with anyone who would have him.

SIR PETER. Aye, aye, madam, but you were pleased enough to listen to me; you never had such an offer before.

LADY TEAZLE. No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who everybody said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

SIR PETER. I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, *you* and Charles are, not without grounds—

LADY TEAZLE. Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

SIR PETER. Very well, madam! very well! A separate maintenance as soon as you please.—Yes, madam, or a divorce! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam!

LADY TEAZLE. Agreed! agreed! And now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple and never differ again, you know—ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye! bye! *Exit*

SIR PETER. Plagues and tortures! can't I make her angry either! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow! But I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper—no! she may break my heart, but she shan't keep her temper. *Exit*

SCENE II. [*A room in*] CHARLES SURFACE'S *house*

Enter TRIP, MOSES, *and* SIR OLIVER SURFACE

TRIP. Here, Master Moses! if you'll stay a moment, I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name?

SIR OLIVER. [*Aside*] Mr. Moses, what is my name?

MOSES. Mr. Premium.

TRIP. Premium—very well.

Exit TRIP, *taking snuff*

SIR OLIVER. To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what!—sure, this was my brother's house?

MOSES. Yes, sir; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, etc., just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

SIR OLIVER. In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

[*Re-*]*enter* TRIP

TRIP. My master says you must wait, gentlemen; he has company and can't speak with you yet.

SIR OLIVER. If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message.

TRIP. Yes, yes, sir; he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium. No, no, no!

SIR OLIVER. Very well; and I pray, sir, what may be your name?

TRIP. Trip, sir; my name is Trip, at your service.

SIR OLIVER. Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

TRIP. Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags[1] and bouquets.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Bags and bouquets? halters and bastinadoes!

TRIP. And à propos, Moses, have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Wants to raise money too!—mercy on me! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns.

MOSES. 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

[1] For the hair.

TRIP. Good lack, you surprise me! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

MOSES. No, 'twouldn't do. 55

TRIP. A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad! 61

MOSES. Well, but you must insure your place.

TRIP. Oh, with all my heart! I'll insure my place, and my life too, if you please.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) It's more than I would your neck.

MOSES. But is there nothing you could deposit? 69

TRIP. Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately, but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November—or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit[1] on the blue and silver;—these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles as a collateral security—hey, my little fellow? 79

MOSES. Well, well. (*Bell rings*)

TRIP. Egad, I heard the bell! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses!—This way, gentlemen.—I'll insure my place, you know.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed! *Exeunt* 87

SCENE III. [*Another room in the same*]

CHARLES SURFACE [*and his friends*] *at a table with wine, etc.*

CHARLES SURFACE. 'Fore Heaven, 'tis true!—there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness, but, plague on't, they won't drink. 5

CARELESS. It is so indeed, Charles! they give in to all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh, certainly society suffers by it intolerably! for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulence of champagne without the spirit or flavor.

1ST GENTLEMAN. But what are they to do who love play better than wine? 17

CARELESS. True! there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

CHARLES SURFACE. Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad, I am never so successful as when I am a little merry; let me throw on a bottle of champagne, and I never lose—at least I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing. 28

2D GENTLEMAN. Aye, that I believe.

CHARLES SURFACE. And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love who is an abjurer of wine? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats a-top is the maid that has bewitched you.

CARELESS. Now then, Charles, be honest and give us your real favorite. 37

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth. 41

CARELESS. Oh! then we'll find some canonised vestals or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant!

CHARLES SURFACE. Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria! Maria!—

SIR HARRY. Maria who? 47

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, damn the surname!—'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar.—But now, Sir Harry, beware, we must have beauty superlative.

CARELESS. Nay, never study,[2] Sir Harry; we'll stand to the toast though your mistress

[1] a future claim.

[2] never fear.

should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.

SIR HARRY. Egad, so I have! and I'll give him the song instead of the lady. (*Sings*)

SONG

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.
CHORUS. Let the toast pass,—
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;
Now to the maid who has none, sir;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.
CHORUS. Let the toast pass, etc.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow;
Now to her that's as brown as a berry;
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
And now to the damsel that's merry.
CHORUS. Let the toast pass, etc.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
So fill up your glasses—nay, fill to the brim—
And let us e'en toast them together.
CHORUS. Let the toast pass, etc.

ALL. Bravo! bravo!

Enter TRIP *and whispers* CHARLES SURFACE

CHARLES SURFACE. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little.—Careless, take the chair, will you?

CARELESS. Nay, prithee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropped in by chance?

CHARLES SURFACE. No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

CARELESS. Oh, damn it! let's have the Jew in.

1ST GENTLEMAN. Aye, and the broker too, by all means.

2D GENTLEMAN. Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

CHARLES SURFACE. Egad, with all my heart!—Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in. *Exit* TRIP —Though there's one of them a stranger, I can tell you.

CARELESS. Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, hang 'em, no! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities, and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

[*Re-*]*enter* TRIP, [*with*] SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES

CHARLES SURFACE. So, honest Moses, walk in; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, sir.

CHARLES SURFACE. Set chairs, Trip.—Sit down, Mr. Premium.—Glasses, Trip.

TRIP *gives chairs and glasses, and exit* —Sit down, Moses.—Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment; here's *Success to usury!*—Moses, fill the gentlemen a bumper.

MOSES. Success to usury! (*Drinks*)

CARELESS. Right, Moses—usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

SIR OLIVER. Then—here's all the success it deserves! (*Drinks*)

CARELESS. No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast and must drink it in a pint bumper.

1ST GENTLEMAN. A pint bumper, at least.

MOSES. Oh, pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

CARELESS. And therefore loves good wine.

2D GENTLEMAN. Give Moses a quart glass —this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

CARELESS. Here, now for't! I'll see justice done, to the last drop of my bottle.

SIR OLIVER. Nay, pray, gentlemen—I did not expect this usage.

CHARLES SURFACE. No, hang it, you shan't; Mr. Premium's a stranger.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Odd! I wish I was well out of their company.

CARELESS. Plague on 'em then! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room. —Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

CHARLES SURFACE. I will! I will!

Exeunt SIR HARRY BUMPER *and* Gentlemen: CARELESS *following*

—Careless!

CARELESS. (*Returning*) Well!

CHARLES SURFACE. Perhaps I may want you.

CARELESS. Oh, you know I am always ready; word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. *Exit*

MOSES. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honor and secrecy, and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is—

CHARLES SURFACE. Pshaw! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression; he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow who wants to borrow money; you I take to be a prudent old fellow who have got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent sooner than not have it; and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without farther ceremony.

SIR OLIVER. Exceeding frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, no, sir! plain dealing in business I always think best.

SIR OLIVER. Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend—but then, he's an unconscionable dog. Isn't he, Moses?

MOSES. But you can't help that.

SIR OLIVER. And must sell stock to accommodate you—mustn't he, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth and scorn to tell a lie.

CHARLES SURFACE. Right. People that speak truth generally do. But these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't.

SIR OLIVER. Well, but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

CHARLES SURFACE. Not a mole-hill nor a twig but what's in the bough-pots out of the window.

SIR OLIVER. Nor any stock, I presume?

CHARLES SURFACE. Nothing but live stock—and that only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connections?

SIR OLIVER. Why, to say truth, I am.

CHARLES SURFACE. Then you must know that I have a dev'lish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations?

SIR OLIVER. That you have a wealthy uncle, I have heard, but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, no!—there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favorite, and that he talks of leaving me everything.

SIR OLIVER. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

CHARLES SURFACE. Yes, yes, 'tis just so. Moses knows 'tis true; don't you, Moses?

MOSES. Oh, yes! I'll swear to't.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal.

CHARLES SURFACE. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life—though at the same time the old fellow has been so liberal to me that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear that anything had happened to him.

SIR OLIVER. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could

offer me—for I might live to a hundred and never see the principal.

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, yes, you would! the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

SIR OLIVER. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

CHARLES SURFACE. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

SIR OLIVER. No, indeed I am not—though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in christendom.

CHARLES SURFACE. There again, now, you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor Uncle Oliver. Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately that his nearest relations don't know him.

SIR OLIVER. No! Ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him! Ha! ha! ha! egad—ha! ha! ha!

CHARLES SURFACE. Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

SIR OLIVER. No, no, I'm not.

CHARLES SURFACE. Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—you know that mends your chance.

SIR OLIVER. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over; nay, some say he is actually arrived.

CHARLES SURFACE. Pshaw! sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no, rely on't he's at this moment at Calcutta. Isn't he, Moses?

MOSES. Oh, yes, certainly.

SIR OLIVER. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority—haven't I, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, most undoubted!

SIR OLIVER. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of?

CHARLES SURFACE. How do you mean?

SIR OLIVER. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

CHARLES SURFACE. O lud! [illegible] long ago. Moses can tell you [illegible] than I can.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Good lack! [illegible] family race-cups and corporation-bow[illegible] (*Aloud*) Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and compact—

CHARLES SURFACE. Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition; so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Mercy upon me! learning that had run in the family like an heirloom!—(*Aloud*) Pray, what are become of the books?

CHARLES SURFACE. You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

MOSES. I know nothing of books.

SIR OLIVER. So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

CHARLES SURFACE. Not much, indeed, unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room full of ancestors above, and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain.

SIR OLIVER. Hey! what the devil! sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you?

CHARLES SURFACE. Every man of them, to the best bidder.

SIR OLIVER. What! your great-uncles and aunts?

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, and my great-grandfathers and grandmothers too.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Now I give him up! —(*Aloud*) What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Odds life! do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood?

CHARLES SURFACE. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry; what need you care, if you have your money's worth?

SIR OLIVER. Well, I'll be the purchaser; I think I can dispose of the family canvas. —(*Aside*) Oh, I'll never forgive him this! —never!

[*e-*]*enter* CARELESS

S. Come, Charles, what keeps

ARLES SURFACE. I can't come yet. Faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors!

CARELESS. Oh, burn your ancestors!

CHARLES SURFACE. No, he may do that afterwards if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you: egad, you shall be auctioneer—so come along with us.

CARELESS. Oh, have with you, if that's the case.—[I can] handle a hammer as well as a dice-box!

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Oh, the profligates!

CHARLES SURFACE. Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

SIR OLIVER. Oh, yes, I do, vastly! Ha! ha! ha! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha! ha!—(*Aside*) Oh, the prodigal!

CHARLES SURFACE. To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance if he can't make free with his own relations? *Exeunt*

ACT IV

SCENE I. *Picture room at* CHARLES [SURFACE'S *house*]

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, *and* CARELESS

CHARLES SURFACE. Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in; here they are, the family of the Surfaces up to the Conquest.

SIR OLIVER. And in my opinion a goodly collection.

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, aye, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting; no *volontaire grâce*[1] or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive[2] to make your portrait independent of you, so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

SIR OLIVER. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

CHARLES SURFACE. I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family.—But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

CARELESS. Aye, aye, this will do. But, Charles, I haven't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

CHARLES SURFACE. Egad, that's true. What parchment have we here? Oh, our genealogy in full. Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany; here's the family tree for you, you rogue! This shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto*[3] parricide!

CARELESS. Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation, indeed;—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer but a catalogue into the bargain. Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

CHARLES SURFACE. Bravo, Careless! Well, here's my great-uncle, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet.[4] What say you, Mr. Premium? look at him—there's a hero! not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid?

MOSES. Mr. Premium would have *you* speak.

1 I.e. added charm.

2 Q1 *contrives*.

3 retroactive.

4 Against the French; 1709.

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff officer.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds!—Very well, sir, I take him at that.

CHARLES SURFACE. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great-aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, thought to be in his best manner and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Ah! poor Deborah! —a woman who set such a value on herself! —Five pounds ten—she's mine.

CHARLES SURFACE. Knock down my aunt Deborah! Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs.—You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs and the ladies their own hair.

SIR OLIVER. Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

CHARLES SURFACE. Well, take that couple for the same.

MOSES. 'Tis [a] good bargain.

CHARLES SURFACE. Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

MOSES. Four guineas.

CHARLES SURFACE. Four guineas! Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig. —Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack[1]; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

SIR OLIVER. By all means.

CARELESS. Gone!

CHARLES SURFACE. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of Parliament and noted speakers; and, what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

SIR OLIVER. That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honor of Parliament.

CARELESS. Well said, little Premium! I'll knock them down at forty.

CHARLES SURFACE. Here's a jolly fellow —I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Manchester: take him at eight pounds.

SIR OLIVER. No, no; six will do for the mayor.

CHARLES SURFACE. Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen there into the bargain.

SIR OLIVER. They're mine.

CHARLES SURFACE. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't! we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale. What say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

CARELESS. Aye, aye, that will be the best way.

SIR OLIVER. Well, well, anything to accommodate you; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

CARELESS. What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee?

SIR OLIVER. Yes, sir, I mean that—though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

CHARLES SURFACE. What, that?—Oh, that's my uncle Oliver! 'twas done before he went to India.

CARELESS. Your uncle Oliver! Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw—an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance!—an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium?

SIR OLIVER. Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

CHARLES SURFACE. No, hang it; I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

[1] Seat of the Lord Chancellor.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) The rogue's my nephew after all!—But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

CHARLES SURFACE. I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) I forgive him everything!—But, sir, when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

CHARLES SURFACE. Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) How like his father the dog is!—Well, well, I have done.—(*Aside*) I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance.—Here is a draft for your sum.

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds!

SIR OLIVER. You will not let Sir Oliver go?

CHARLES SURFACE. Zounds! no! I tell you once more.

SIR OLIVER. Then never mind the difference; we'll balance that another time. But give me your hand on the bargain. You are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

CHARLES SURFACE. Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow!—But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen.

SIR OLIVER. Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

CHARLES SURFACE. But hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

SIR OLIVER. I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, all but the little nabob.

SIR OLIVER. You're fixed on that?

CHARLES SURFACE. Peremptorily.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) A dear extravagant rogue!—Good day!—Come, Moses.—(*Aside*) Let me hear now who dares call him profligate!

Exeunt SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES

CARELESS. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever saw!

CHARLES SURFACE. Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—Hah, here's Rowley.—Do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

CARELESS. I will—but don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

CHARLES SURFACE. Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them.

CARELESS. Nothing else.

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, aye, never fear.

Exit CARELESS

—So! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see, two-thirds of this is mine by right—five hundred and thirty odd pounds. 'Fore Heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for!—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant. [*Bows*]

Enter ROWLEY

—Ha! old Rowley! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

ROWLEY. Yes, I heard they were a-going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, there's the point! my distresses are so many that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting, but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

ROWLEY. There's no making you serious a moment.

CHARLES SURFACE. Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley—here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

ROWLEY. A hundred pounds! Consider only—

CHARLES SURFACE. Gad's life, don't talk about it! poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and if you don't make haste we shall have someone call that has a better right to the money.

ROWLEY. Ah! there's the point! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb—

CHARLES SURFACE. "Be just before you're generous."—Why, so I would if I could, but Justice is an old, hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity, for the soul of me.

ROWLEY. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection—

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, aye, it's all very true; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by Heaven, I'll give; so, damn your economy —and now for hazard. *Exeunt*

SCENE II. *The parlor*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES

MOSES. Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

SIR OLIVER. True, but he would not sell my picture.

MOSES. And loves wine and women so much.

SIR OLIVER. But he would not sell my picture.

MOSES. And games so deep.

SIR OLIVER. But he would not sell my picture!—Oh, here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY

ROWLEY. So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase—

SIR OLIVER. Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

ROWLEY. And here has he commissioned me to re-deliver you part of the purchase money—I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

MOSES. Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so damned charitable.

ROWLEY. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

SIR OLIVER. Well, well, I'll pay his debts and his benevolence too. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

ROWLEY. Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP

TRIP. Oh, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out; this way—Moses, a word. *Exeunt* TRIP *and* MOSES

SIR OLIVER. There's a fellow for you! Would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming and wanted to raise money before he got to his master!

ROWLEY. Indeed!

SIR OLIVER. Yes; they are now planning an annuity business. Ah, Master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters when they were worn a little threadbare; but now they have their vices, like their birthday clothes, with the gloss on. *Exeunt*

SCENE III. *A library* [*in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *house*]

[*Enter*] JOSEPH SURFACE *and* Servant

JOSEPH SURFACE. No letter from Lady Teazle?

SERVANT. No, sir.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) I am surprised she has not sent if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I wish I may not lose the heiress through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favor. (*Knocking without*)

SERVANT. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Hold! See whether it is or not before you go to the door. I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

SERVANT. 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Stay, stay; draw that screen before the window—that will do. My opposite neighbor is a maiden lady of so curious a temper.

Servant *draws the screen, and exit*

I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria, but she must by no means be let into that secret—at least till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE

LADY TEAZLE. What, sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient? O lud! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

JOSEPH SURFACE. O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

LADY TEAZLE. Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too—that's the best of the story, isn't it?

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up.

LADY TEAZLE. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) Indeed I do not.—Oh, certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

LADY TEAZLE. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking to have the most ill-natured things said of one? And there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation too; that's what vexes me.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Aye, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed, for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

LADY TEAZLE. No, to be sure; then I'd forgive their malice. But to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody—that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed, 'tis monstrous!

JOSEPH SURFACE. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken and she owes it to the honor of her sex to outwit him.

LADY TEAZLE. Indeed! so that if he suspects me without cause, it follows that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you, and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

LADY TEAZLE. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Ah, my dear madam, there is the great mistake! 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms and careless of the world's opinion? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper and outrageous at his suspicions? why, the consciousness of your innocence.

LADY TEAZLE. 'Tis very true!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling faux pas, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humor and agree with your husband.

LADY TEAZLE. Do you think so?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for—in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

LADY TEAZLE. So, so; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

LADY TEAZLE. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

JOSEPH SURFACE. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

LADY TEAZLE. Why, if my understanding were once convinced—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honor to desire it.

LADY TEAZLE. Don't you think we may as well leave honor out of the argument?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Ah, the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

LADY TEAZLE. I doubt they do, indeed; and I will fairly own to you that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill usage sooner than your *honorable* logic, after all.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Taking her hand*) Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of—

[*Re-*]*enter* Servant

—'Sdeath, you blockhead—what do you want?

SERVANT. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir Peter!—Oons—the devil!

LADY TEAZLE. Sir Peter! O lud!—I'm ruined! I'm ruined!

SERVANT. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

LADY TEAZLE. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic—Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again— (*Goes behind the screen*)

JOSEPH SURFACE. Give me that book.

(*Sits down.* Servant *pretends to adjust his chair*)

Enter SIR PETER

SIR PETER. Aye, ever improving himself—Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon—(*Gaping, throws away the book*) I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things in which I am a coxcomb.

SIR PETER. 'Tis very neat, indeed. Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, yes, I find great use in that screen.

SIR PETER. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find anything in a hurry.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) Aye, or to hide anything in a hurry either.

SIR PETER. Well, I have a little private business—

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*To the* Servant) You need not stay.

SERVANT. No, sir.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Here's a chair, Sir Peter—I beg—

SIR PETER. Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

SIR PETER. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but what's worse I have pretty good authority to sup-

pose she has formed an attachment to another.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Indeed! you astonish me!

SIR PETER. Yes! and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

JOSEPH SURFACE. How! you alarm me exceedingly.

SIR PETER. Aye, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathise with me!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yes—believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

SIR PETER. I am convinced of it. Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

JOSEPH SURFACE. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite!

SIR PETER. Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

JOSEPH SURFACE. My brother!—impossible!

SIR PETER. Oh, my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

SIR PETER. True, but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

SIR PETER. Aye, but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow?

JOSEPH SURFACE. That's very true.

SIR PETER. And there's, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any great affection for me; and if she were to be frail and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me—the foolish old bachelor who had married a girl.

JOSEPH SURFACE. That's true, to be sure—they would laugh.

SIR PETER. Laugh! aye, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what of me.

JOSEPH SURFACE. No, you must never make it public.

SIR PETER. But then again—that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Aye, there's the point. When ingratitude barbs the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

SIR PETER. Aye—I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he had been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—my advice.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, 'tis not to be credited! There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine—I disclaim kindred with him; for the man who can break the laws of hospitality and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

SIR PETER. What a difference there is between you! What noble sentiments!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yet I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honor.

SIR PETER. I am sure I wish to think well of her and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her, and in our last quarrel she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way and be her own mistress in that respect for the future; and if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live, and by the other the bulk of my fortune at my death.

JOSEPH SURFACE. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous.—(*Aside*) I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

SIR PETER. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I

would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) Nor I, if I could help it.

SIR PETER. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Softly*) Oh, no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

SIR PETER. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Softly*) I beg you will not mention it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate!—(*Aside*) 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way!

SIR PETER. And though you are so averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion for Maria, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of, to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never—

[*Re-*]*enter* Servant

—Well, sir?

SERVANT. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

JOSEPH SURFACE. 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within.—I'm out for the day.

SIR PETER. Stay—hold—a thought has struck me;—you shall be at home.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Well, well, let him up.—*Exit* Servant (*Aside*) He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however.

SIR PETER. Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you. Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere; then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick—to trepan my brother too?

SIR PETER. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me; here, behind the screen will be—Hey! what the devil! There seems to be one listener here already.—I'll swear, I saw a petticoat!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Ha! ha! ha! Well, this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph[1] either! Hark'ee, 'tis a little French milliner, a silly rogue that plagues me; and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

SIR PETER. Ah, you rogue!—But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it!

SIR PETER. No? then, faith, let her hear it out.—Here's a closet will do as well.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Well, go in there.

SIR PETER. (*Going into the closet*) Sly rogue! sly rogue!

JOSEPH SURFACE. A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

LADY TEAZLE. (*Peeping*) Couldn't I steal off?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Keep close, my angel!

SIR PETER. (*Peeping*) Joseph, tax him home.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Back, my dear friend!

LADY TEAZLE. (*Peeping*) Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Be still, my life!

SIR PETER. (*Peeping*) You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

JOSEPH SURFACE. In, in, my dear Sir Peter!—'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE

CHARLES SURFACE. Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

[1] Genesis xxxix, 7–12, tells of Joseph's resistance to Potiphar's wife.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Neither, brother, I assure you.

CHARLES SURFACE. But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

JOSEPH SURFACE. He *was*, brother; but hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

CHARLES SURFACE. What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

JOSEPH SURFACE. No, sir; but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

CHARLES SURFACE. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men.—But how so, pray?

JOSEPH SURFACE. To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavoring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

CHARLES SURFACE. Who, I? O lud! not I, upon my word.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?—or, what is worse, Lady Teazle has found out she has an old husband?

JOSEPH SURFACE. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh—

CHARLES SURFACE. True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honor.

JOSEPH SURFACE. [*Loudly*] Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this.

CHARLES SURFACE. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me, but upon my soul I never gave her the least encouragement. Besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

JOSEPH SURFACE. But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you—

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonorable action, but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Well—

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, I believe I should be obliged to borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming *me* with Lady Teazle; for, i'faith, I always understood you were her favorite.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

CHARLES SURFACE. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

CHARLES SURFACE. Egad, I'm serious! Don't you remember one day when I called here—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Nay, prithee, Charles—

CHARLES SURFACE. And found you together—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Zounds, sir, I insist—

CHARLES SURFACE. And another time when your servant—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Brother, brother, a word with you!—(*Aside*) Gad, I must stop him.

CHARLES SURFACE. Informed, I say that—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

CHARLES SURFACE. How, Sir Peter! Where is he?

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Points to the closet*) Softly!—there!

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, 'fore Heaven, I'll have him out.—Sir Peter, come forth!

JOSEPH SURFACE. No, no—

CHARLES SURFACE. I say, Sir Peter, come into court.—(*Pulls in* SIR PETER) What! my old guardian!—What! turn inquisitor and take evidence incog.?

SIR PETER. Give me your hand, Charles—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan!

CHARLES SURFACE. Indeed!

SIR PETER. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did; what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

CHARLES SURFACE. Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more, (*Apart to* JOSEPH) wasn't it, Joseph?

SIR PETER. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

CHARLES SURFACE. Ah, aye, that was a joke.

SIR PETER. Yes, yes, I know his honor too well.

CHARLES SURFACE. But you might as well have suspected *him* as *me* in this matter, for all that, (*Apart to* JOSEPH) mightn't he, Joseph?

SIR PETER. Well, well, I believe you.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) Would they were both out of the room!

SIR PETER. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

[*Re-*]*enter* Servant, *and whispers* JOSEPH SURFACE

SERVANT. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up. [*Exit* Servant]

JOSEPH SURFACE. Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you downstairs; here is a person come on particular business.

CHARLES SURFACE. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) They must not be left together.—I'll send this man away, and return directly.—(*Apart to* SIR PETER) Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner.

SIR PETER. (*Apart to* JOSEPH) I! not for the world!

Exit JOSEPH SURFACE

—Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. —Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

CHARLES SURFACE. Pshaw! he is too moral by half; and so apprehensive of his "good name," as he calls it, that I suppose he would as soon let a priest into his house as a girl.

SIR PETER. No, no—come, come—you wrong him. No, no! Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect.—(*Aside*) I have a great mind to tell him—we should have a laugh at Joseph.

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, hang him! he's a very anchorite—a young hermit!

SIR PETER. Hark'ee—you must not abuse him; he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, you won't tell him?

SIR PETER. No—but—this way.—(*Aside*) Egad, I'll tell him.—Hark'ee—have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph?

CHARLES SURFACE. I should like it of all things.

SIR PETER. Then, i'faith, we will! I'll be quit with him for discovering me. He had a girl with him when I called.

CHARLES SURFACE. What! Joseph? you jest.

SIR PETER. Hush!—a little French milliner; and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

CHARLES SURFACE. The devil she is!

SIR PETER. Hush! I tell you. (*Points*)

CHARLES SURFACE. Behind the screen! 'Slife, let's unveil her!

SIR PETER. No, no, he's coming—you sha'n't, indeed!

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner!

SIR PETER. Not for the world!—Joseph will never forgive me.

CHARLES SURFACE. I'll stand by you—

SIR PETER. Odds, here he is!

JOSEPH SURFACE *enters just as* CHARLES SURFACE *throws down the screen*

CHARLES SURFACE. Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful!

SIR PETER. Lady Teazle, by all that's damnable!

CHARLES SURFACE. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Not a word! —Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too?

—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now! All mute!—Well—though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another; so I'll leave you to yourselves. —(*Going*) Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness.—Sir Peter! "there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!" *Exit* CHARLES 588

(*They stand for some time looking at each other*)

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir Peter—notwithstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me—if you will afford me your patience—I make no doubt—but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

SIR PETER. If you please, sir. 594

JOSEPH SURFACE. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper —and knowing my friendship to the family —she, sir, I say—called here—in order that—I might explain these pretensions—but on your coming—being apprehensive—as I said—of your jealousy—she withdrew —and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter. 605

SIR PETER. A very clear account, upon my word, and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

LADY TEAZLE. For not one word of it, Sir Peter! 610

SIR PETER. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

LADY TEAZLE. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

SIR PETER. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am! 616

JOSEPH SURFACE. (*Aside*) 'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

LADY TEAZLE. Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself. 620

SIR PETER. Aye, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

LADY TEAZLE. Hear me, Sir Peter!—I came here on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came, seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honor to his baseness. 630

SIR PETER. Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed!

JOSEPH SURFACE. The woman's mad!

LADY TEAZLE. No, sir; she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means.—Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has so penetrated to my heart that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend while he affected honorable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him. 649

Exit LADY TEAZLE

JOSEPH SURFACE. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows—

SIR PETER. That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience. 653

JOSEPH SURFACE. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to—

Exeunt SIR PETER *and* JOSEPH SURFACE, *talking*

ACT V

SCENE I. *The library* [*in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *house*]

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* Servant

JOSEPH SURFACE. Mr. Stanley! and why should you think I would see him? You must know he comes to ask something.

SERVANT. Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him. 6

JOSEPH SURFACE. Pshaw! blockhead! to suppose that I should now be in a temper

to receive visits from poor relations!—Well, why don't you show the fellow up?

SERVANT. I will, sir.—Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Go, fool!

Exit Servant

—Sure, Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before!—my character with Sir Peter, my hopes with Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humor to listen to other people's distresses! I sha'n't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself and put a little charity into my face, however. *Exit*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* ROWLEY

SIR OLIVER. What! does he avoid us? That was he, was it not?

ROWLEY. It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

SIR OLIVER. Oh, plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

ROWLEY. As to his way of thinking, I cannot pretend to decide; for to do him justice he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

SIR OLIVER. Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments at his fingers' ends.

ROWLEY. Or rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that "charity begins at home."

SIR OLIVER. And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

ROWLEY. I doubt you'll find it so;—but he's coming. I musn't seem to interrupt you; and you know, immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

SIR OLIVER. True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

ROWLEY. Without losing a moment.

Exit

SIR OLIVER. I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting.—Mr. Stanley, I presume.

SIR OLIVER. At your service.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, I beg you will do me the honor to sit down—I entreat you, sir.

SIR OLIVER. Dear sir—there's no occasion.—(*Aside*) Too civil by half!

JOSEPH SURFACE. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley, but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, I think, Mr. Stanley?

SIR OLIVER. I was, sir—so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Dear sir, there needs no apology; he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

SIR OLIVER. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

JOSEPH SURFACE. I wish he was, sir, with all my heart; you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

SIR OLIVER. I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

JOSEPH SURFACE. My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man—a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing—though people, I know, have thought otherwise, and for my part I never chose to contradict the report.

SIR OLIVER. What! has he never transmitted you bullion—rupees—pagodas?[1]

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, dear sir, nothing of the kind! No, no; a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats,[2] and Indian crackers—little more, believe me.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—avadavats and Indian crackers!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother. There are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Not I, for one!

JOSEPH SURFACE. The sums I have lent him! Indeed I have been exceedingly to blame—it was an amiable weakness; however, I don't pretend to defend it—and now I feel it doubly culpable since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Dissembler!—Then, sir, you can't assist me?

JOSEPH SURFACE. At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot; but whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

SIR OLIVER. I am extremely sorry—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Not more than I, believe me; to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

SIR OLIVER. Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

JOSEPH SURFACE. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley.—(*Calls to* Servant) William, be ready to open the door.

SIR OLIVER. Oh, dear sir, no ceremony.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Your very obedient.

SIR OLIVER. Your most obsequious.

JOSEPH SURFACE. You may depend upon hearing from me whenever I can be of service.

SIR OLIVER. Sweet sir, you are too good!

JOSEPH SURFACE. In the meantime I wish you health and spirits.

SIR OLIVER. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, yours as sincerely.

SIR OLIVER. (*Aside*) Charles, you are my heir! *Exit*

JOSEPH SURFACE. This is one bad effect of a good character; it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it makes just as good a show and pays no tax.

[*Re-*]*enter* ROWLEY

ROWLEY. Mr. Surface, your servant. I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Always happy to see Mr. Rowley. (*Reads the letter*) Sir Oliver Surface!—My uncle arrived!

ROWLEY. He is, indeed; we have just parted—quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

JOSEPH SURFACE. I am astonished!—William! stop Mr. Stanley if he's not gone.

ROWLEY. Oh! he's out of reach, I believe.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Why did you not let me know this when you came in together?

ROWLEY. I thought you had particular business. But I must be gone to inform your brother and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

JOSEPH SURFACE. So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—(*Aside*) Never, to be sure, was anything so damned unlucky!

ROWLEY. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh! I'm overjoyed to hear it.—(*Aside*) Just at this time!

ROWLEY. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

[1] Silver and gold coins of India.
[2] An Indian song bird.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Do, do; pray, give my best duty and affection. Indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him. *Exit* ROWLEY 196
—Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill-fortune. *Exit*

SCENE II. [*A room in*] SIR PETER TEAZLE'S [*house*]

Enter MRS. CANDOUR *and* Maid

MAID. Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

MRS. CANDOUR. Did you tell her it was her friend Mrs. Candour? 4

MAID. Yes, ma'am, but she begs you will excuse her.

MRS. CANDOUR. Do go again; I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress. *Exit* Maid
—Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses. 15

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE

—Oh, dear Sir Benjamin! you have heard, I suppose—

SIR BENJAMIN. Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface— 19

MRS. CANDOUR. And Sir Peter's discovery—

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, the strangest piece of business, to be sure! 23

MRS. CANDOUR. Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

SIR BENJAMIN. Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all; he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface. 29

MRS. CANDOUR. Mr. Surface! Why, 'twas with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

SIR BENJAMIN. No, no, I tell you—Mr. Surface is the gallant. 33

MRS. CANDOUR. No such thing! Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

SIR BENJAMIN. I tell you I had it from one— 38

MRS. CANDOUR. And I have it from one—

SIR BENJAMIN. Who had it from one who had it—

MRS. CANDOUR. From one immediately—But here comes Lady Sneerwell; perhaps she knows the whole affair. 44

Enter LADY SNEERWELL

LADY SNEERWELL. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Lady Teazle!

MRS. CANDOUR. Aye, my dear friend, who would have thought— 49

LADY SNEERWELL. Well, there is no trusting appearances—though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

MRS. CANDOUR. To be sure, her manners were a little too free; but then, she was so young! 55

LADY SNEERWELL. And had, indeed, some good qualities.

MRS. CANDOUR. So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars? 59

LADY SNEERWELL. No, but everybody says that Mr. Surface—

SIR BENJAMIN. Aye, there! I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

MRS. CANDOUR. No, no! indeed, the assignation was with Charles. 65

LADY SNEERWELL. With Charles! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

MRS. CANDOUR. Yes, yes; he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer. 70

SIR BENJAMIN. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour, but be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not— 74

MRS. CANDOUR. Sir Peter's wound! Oh, mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

LADY SNEERWELL. Nor I, a syllable.

SIR BENJAMIN. No! what, no mention of the duel?

MRS. CANDOUR. Not a word. 80

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, yes! they fought before they left the room.

LADY SNEERWELL. Pray, let us hear!

MRS. CANDOUR. Aye, do oblige us with the duel!

SIR BENJAMIN. "Sir," says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, "you are a most ungrateful fellow."

MRS. CANDOUR. Aye, to Charles—

SIR BENJAMIN. No, no—to Mr. Surface —"a most ungrateful fellow; and old as I am, sir," says he, "I insist on immediate satisfaction."

MRS. CANDOUR. Aye, that must have been to Charles, for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

SIR BENJAMIN. Gad's life, ma'am, not at all—"giving me immediate satisfaction."— On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after her, calling out for hartshorn and water; then, madam, they began to fight with swords—

Enter CRABTREE

CRABTREE. With pistols, nephew—pistols! I have it from undoubted authority.

MRS. CANDOUR. Oh, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true!

CRABTREE. Too true, indeed, madam, and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded—

SIR BENJAMIN. By a thrust in second[1] quite through his left side—

CRABTREE. By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

MRS. CANDOUR. Mercy on me! Poor Sir Peter!

CRABTREE. Yes, madam—though Charles would have avoided the matter if he could.

MRS. CANDOUR. I knew Charles was the person.

SIR BENJAMIN. My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

CRABTREE. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude—

SIR BENJAMIN. That I told you, you know—

CRABTREE. Do, nephew, let me speak!— and insisted on immediate—

[1] A downward parry toward the left.

SIR BENJAMIN. Just as I said—

CRABTREE. Odds life, nephew, allow others to know something too! A pair of pistols lay on the bureau (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salthill, where he had been to see the Montem with a friend who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

SIR BENJAMIN. I heard nothing of this.

CRABTREE. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one, and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the fire-place, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

SIR BENJAMIN. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the true one, for all that.

LADY SNEERWELL. (*Aside*) I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information.

Exit LADY SNEERWELL

SIR BENJAMIN. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

CRABTREE. Yes, yes, they certainly do say —but that's neither here nor there.

MRS. CANDOUR. But pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

CRABTREE. Oh! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

MRS. CANDOUR. I believe so; and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

CRABTREE. Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

SIR BENJAMIN. Hey! who comes here?

CRABTREE. Oh, this is he—the physician, depend on't.

MRS. CANDOUR. Oh, certainly! it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE

CRABTREE. Well, doctor, what hopes?

MRS. CANDOUR. Aye, doctor, how's your patient?

SIR BENJAMIN. Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

CRABTREE. A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred!

SIR OLIVER. Doctor!—a wound with a small-sword! and a bullet in the thorax!—Oons! are you mad, good people?

SIR BENJAMIN. Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

SIR OLIVER. Truly, I am to thank you for my degree if I am.

CRABTREE. Only a friend of Sir Peter's then, I presume. But sir, you must have heard of his accident?

SIR OLIVER. Not a word!

CRABTREE. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

SIR OLIVER. The devil he is!

SIR BENJAMIN. Run through the body—

CRABTREE. Shot in the breast—

SIR BENJAMIN. By one Mr. Surface—

CRABTREE. Aye, the younger.

SIR OLIVER. Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts; however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

SIR BENJAMIN. Oh, yes, we agree in that.

CRABTREE. Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt of that.

SIR OLIVER. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes, walking as if nothing at all was the matter.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE

—Odds heart, Sir Peter! you are come in good time, I promise you, for we had just given you over!

SIR BENJAMIN. (*Aside to* CRABTREE) Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery!

SIR OLIVER. Why, man! what do you out of bed with a small-sword through your body and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

SIR PETER. A small-sword and a bullet!

SIR OLIVER. Aye; these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor to make me an accomplice.

SIR PETER. Why, what is all this?

SIR BENJAMIN. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

SIR PETER. (*Aside*) So, so—all over the town already!

CRABTREE. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

SIR PETER. Sir, what business is that of yours?

MRS. CANDOUR. —Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

SIR PETER. Plague on your pity, ma'am! I desire none of it.

SIR BENJAMIN. However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

SIR PETER. Sir, sir! I desire to be master in my own house.

CRABTREE. 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

SIR PETER. I insist on being left to myself—without ceremony, I insist on your leaving my house directly!

MRS. CANDOUR. Well, well, we are going; and depend on't, we'll make the best report of it we can. *Exit*

SIR PETER. Leave my house!

CRABTREE. —And tell how hardly you've been treated. *Exit*

SIR PETER. Leave my house!

SIR BENJAMIN. —And how patiently you bear it. *Exit*

SIR PETER. Fiends! vipers! furies! Oh! that their own venom would choke them!

SIR OLIVER. They are very provoking indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY

ROWLEY. I heard high words; what has ruffled you, sir?

SIR PETER. Pshaw! what signifies asking? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

ROWLEY. Well, I'm not inquisitive.

SIR OLIVER. Well, Sir Peter, I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

SIR PETER. A precious couple they are!

ROWLEY. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

SIR OLIVER. Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man, after all.

ROWLEY. Aye, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

SIR OLIVER. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.[1]

ROWLEY. It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

SIR OLIVER. Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age!—But how's this, Sir Peter? you don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise as I expected.

SIR PETER. Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

ROWLEY. What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

SIR PETER. Pshaw! plague on you both! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you!

ROWLEY. Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humbled that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

SIR PETER. And does Sir Oliver know all this?

SIR OLIVER. Every circumstance.

SIR PETER. What—of the closet and the screen, hey?

SIR OLIVER. Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. Oh, I have been vastly diverted with the story! ha! ha! ha!

SIR PETER. 'Twas very pleasant.

SIR OLIVER. I never laughed more in my life, I assure you—ha! ha! ha!

SIR PETER. Oh, vastly diverting!—ha! ha! ha!

ROWLEY. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments! ha! ha! ha!

SIR PETER. Yes, yes, his sentiments! ha! ha! ha!—Hypocritical villain!

SIR OLIVER. Aye, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet: ha! ha! ha!

SIR PETER. Ha! ha! 'twas devilish entertaining, to be sure!

SIR OLIVER. Ha! ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down—ha! ha!

SIR PETER. Yes, yes, my face when the screen was thrown down—ha! ha! ha! Oh, I must never show my head again!

SIR OLIVER. But come, come, it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend—though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

SIR PETER. Oh, pray, don't restrain your mirth on my account; it does not hurt me at all. I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. Oh, yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining!

ROWLEY. Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

SIR OLIVER. Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine at least to expose hypocrisy.

SIR PETER. Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart, though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries.

ROWLEY. We'll follow.

Exit SIR OLIVER SURFACE

SIR PETER. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

ROWLEY. No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

SIR PETER. Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

ROWLEY. Oh, this is ungenerous in you!

SIR PETER. Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers evidently intended for Charles?

[1] From Sir Peter's lines, I, ii, 78–79.

ROWLEY. A mere forgery, Sir Peter!—laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

SIR PETER. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has! Rowley, I'll go to her.

ROWLEY. Certainly.

SIR PETER. Though when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

ROWLEY. Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

SIR PETER. I'faith, so I will! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

ROWLEY. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion—

SIR PETER. Hold, Master Rowley! if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment; I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life. *Exeunt*

SCENE III. *The library* [*in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *house*]

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* LADY SNEERWELL

LADY SNEERWELL. Impossible! Will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to Charles, and of course no longer oppose his union with Maria? The thought is distraction to me.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Can passion furnish a remedy?

LADY SNEERWELL. No, nor cunning neither. Oh, I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness.

LADY SNEERWELL. Because the disappointment doesn't reach your heart; your interest only attached you to Maria. Had you felt for her what I have for that ungrateful libertine, neither your temper nor hypocrisy could prevent your showing the sharpness of your vexation.

JOSEPH SURFACE. But why should your reproaches fall on me for this disappointment?

LADY SNEERWELL. Are you not the cause of it? Had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in imposing upon Sir Peter and supplanting your brother, but you must endeavor to seduce his wife? I hate such an avarice of crimes; 'tis an unfair monopoly, and never prospers.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated neither.

LADY SNEERWELL. No!

JOSEPH SURFACE. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us?

LADY SNEERWELL. I do believe so.

JOSEPH SURFACE. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honor to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support.

LADY SNEERWELL. This, indeed, might have assisted.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Come, come; it is not too late yet.—(*Knocking at the door*) But hark! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver. Retire to that room; we'll consult farther when he is gone.

LADY SNEERWELL. Well, but if *he* should find you out too?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake—and you may depend on it, I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

LADY SNEERWELL. I have no diffidence of your abilities, only be constant to one roguery at a time.

JOSEPH SURFACE. I will, I will!

Exit LADY SNEERWELL

—So! 'tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events my character is so

much better than Charles's that I certainly —hey!—what—this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't that he should return to tease me just now! I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here—and—

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE

—Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

SIR OLIVER. Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now; so I must beg—Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

SIR OLIVER. No; Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Zounds, sir! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

SIR OLIVER. Nay, sir—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, I insist on't!—Here, William! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir, not one moment —this is such insolence.

(*Going to push him out*)

Enter CHARLES SURFACE

CHARLES SURFACE. Heyday! what's the matter now? What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow?

JOSEPH SURFACE. So! he has been with you, too, has he?

CHARLES SURFACE. To be sure, he has. Why, he's as honest a little—But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Borrowing! no! But brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every—

CHARLES SURFACE. O Gad, that's true! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Yet, Mr. Stanley insists—

CHARLES SURFACE. Stanley! why, his name's Premium.

JOSEPH SURFACE. No, sir, Stanley.

CHARLES SURFACE. No, no, Premium.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Well, no matter which —but—

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, aye, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides "A. B."[1] at the coffee-house.

(*Knocking*)

JOSEPH SURFACE. 'Sdeath! here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now, I beg, Mr. Stanley—

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, aye, and I beg, Mr. Premium—

SIR OLIVER. Gentlemen—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, by Heaven, you shall go!

CHARLES SURFACE. Aye, out with him, certainly!

SIR OLIVER. This violence—

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, 'tis your own fault.

CHARLES SURFACE. Out with him, to be sure!

(*Both forcing* SIR OLIVER *out*)

Enter SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE, MARIA, *and* ROWLEY

SIR PETER. My old friend, Sir Oliver—Hey! what in the name of wonder—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncle at a first visit!

LADY TEAZLE. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

ROWLEY. Truly it was; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

SIR OLIVER. Nor of Premium either; the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman, and now, egad, with the other I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

JOSEPH SURFACE. Charles!

CHARLES SURFACE. Joseph!

JOSEPH SURFACE. 'Tis now complete!

[1] In common use for clandestine meetings.

CHARLES SURFACE. Very!

SIR OLIVER. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty, and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him; judge, then, my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of faith, charity, and gratitude!

SIR PETER. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration if I had not myself found him to be mean, treacherous, and hypocritical.

LADY TEAZLE. And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call *me* to his character.

SIR PETER. Then I believe we need add no more. If he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

CHARLES SURFACE. (*Aside*) If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to me by and by?

SIR OLIVER. As for that prodigal, his brother, there—

CHARLES SURFACE. (*Aside*) Aye, now comes my turn; the damned family pictures will ruin me!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honor me with a hearing?

CHARLES SURFACE. (*Aside*) Now, if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little.

SIR OLIVER. (*To* JOSEPH) I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself entirely?

JOSEPH SURFACE. I trust I could.

SIR OLIVER. (*To* CHARLES) Well, sir!—and you could justify yourself too, I suppose?

CHARLES SURFACE. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

SIR OLIVER. What!—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose?

CHARLES SURFACE. True, sir; but they were *family* secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

ROWLEY. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

SIR OLIVER. Odds heart, no more I can, nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors—sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

CHARLES SURFACE. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it; but believe me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

SIR OLIVER. Charles, I believe you. Give me your hand again. The ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

CHARLES SURFACE. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

LADY TEAZLE. Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to.

SIR OLIVER. Oh, I have heard of his attachment there; and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right—that blush—

SIR PETER. Well, child, speak your sentiments!

MARIA. Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

CHARLES SURFACE. How, Maria!

SIR PETER. Heyday! what's the mystery now? While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform, I'll warrant you won't have him!

MARIA. His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

CHARLES SURFACE. Lady Sneerwell!

JOSEPH SURFACE. Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed. (*Opens the door*)

Enter LADY SNEERWELL

SIR PETER. So! another French milliner! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose!

LADY SNEERWELL. Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

CHARLES SURFACE. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

JOSEPH SURFACE. I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

SIR PETER. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake.—Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

ROWLEY. Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE

I thought his testimony might be wanted; however, it happens unluckily that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

LADY SNEERWELL. A villain! Treacherous to me at last! Speak, fellow; have you too conspired against me?

SNAKE. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons; you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question, but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

SIR PETER. Plot and counter-plot, egad!

LADY SNEERWELL. (*Going*) The torments of shame and disappointment on you all!.

LADY TEAZLE. Hold, Lady Sneerwell—before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college of which you are president, and inform them that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice and kills characters no longer.

LADY SNEERWELL. You, too, madam!—provoking—insolent! May your husband live these fifty years! *Exit*

SIR PETER. Oons! what a fury!

LADY TEAZLE. A malicious creature, indeed!

SIR PETER. What!—not for her last wish!

LADY TEAZLE. Oh, no!

SIR OLIVER. Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

JOSEPH SURFACE. Sir, I am so confounded to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner to impose on us all, that I know not what to say; however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. *Exit*

SIR PETER. Moral to the last drop!

SIR OLIVER. Aye, and marry her, Joseph, if you can. Oil and vinegar, egad! you'll do very well together.

ROWLEY. I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present?

SNAKE. Before I go, I beg pardon once for all for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

SIR PETER. Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

SNAKE. But I must request of the company that it shall never be known.

SIR PETER. Hey! what the plague! are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

SNAKE. Ah, sir, consider—I live by the badness of my character; I have nothing but my infamy to depend on, and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

SIR OLIVER. Well, well, we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise; never fear. *Exit* SNAKE

SIR PETER. There's a precious rogue!

LADY TEAZLE. See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

SIR OLIVER. Aye, aye, that's as it should be, and, egad, we'll have the wedding tomorrow morning.

CHARLES SURFACE. Thank you, dear uncle.

SIR PETER. What, you rogue! don't you ask the girl's consent first?

CHARLES SURFACE. Oh, I have done that a long time—a minute ago—and she has looked yes.

MARIA. For shame, Charles!—I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word.

SIR OLIVER. Well, then, the fewer the better; may your love for each other never know abatement.

SIR PETER. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do!

CHARLES SURFACE. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me; and I suspect that I owe you much.

SIR OLIVER. You do, indeed, Charles.

ROWLEY. If my efforts to serve you had not succeeded, you would have been in my debt for the attempt; but deserve to be happy, and you overpay me.

SIR PETER. Aye, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

CHARLES SURFACE. Why, as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it. But here shall be my monitor—my gentle guide.—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst waive[1] thy beauty's sway,
Thou still must rule, because I will obey:
An humble fugitive from Folly, view;
No sanctuary near but Love and you.

(*To the audience*)

You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even Scandal dies if you approve.

Exeunt Omnes

EPILOGUE

BY MR. COLMAN

SPOKEN BY LADY TEAZLE

I, who was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind must now blow all one way,
Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
To one dull rusty weathercock—my spouse!

So wills our virtuous bard—the motley Bayes
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays!
Old bachelors who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate their lives;
Each bring his dear to town, all faults upon her—
London will prove the very source of honor.
Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath it serves,
When principles relax, to brace the nerves.
Such is my case; and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er.
And say, ye fair! was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,
Like me, untimely blasted in her bloom,
Like me condemned to such a dismal doom?
Save money—when I just knew how to waste it!
Leave London—just as I began to taste it!
Must I then watch the early crowing cock,
The melancholy ticking of a clock,
In a lone rustic hall forever pounded,[1]
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded?
With humble curate can I now retire
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire),
And at backgammon mortify my soul
That pants for loo, or flutters at a vole[2]?
"Seven's the main!" Dear sound that must expire,
Lost at hot cockles[3] round a Christmas fire!
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!
Farewell the plumèd head, the cushioned tête,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat!
That spirit-stirring drum!—card drums I mean,
Spadille[4]—odd trick—pam[5]—basto[6]—king and queen!
And you, ye knockers, that, with brazen throat,
The welcome visitors' approach denote;

[1] Q1 *wave.*

[1] imprisoned. [2] Taking the game in one deal. [3] In which the person struck is "it" until he guesses the offender. [4] The ace of spades. [5] The knave of clubs. [6] The ace of clubs.

Farewell all quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town!
Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er![1]
All this I told our bard; he smiled, and said 'twas clear,
I ought to play deep tragedy next year.

Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalked away:
"Bless'd were the fair like you; her faults who stopped
And closed her follies when the curtain dropped!
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage."

THE END

1 Lines imitating *Othello*, III, iii, 347–357.

THE CRITIC; OR, A TRAGEDY REHEARSED

By Richard Brinsley Sheridan

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Dangle
Sneer
Sir Fretful Plagiary
Signor Pasticcio Ritornello
Interpreter
Under Prompter
Puff
Mrs. Dangle
Italian Girls

Characters of the Tragedy

Lord Burleigh
Governor of Tilbury Fort
Earl of Leicester
Sir Walter Raleigh
Sir Christopher Hatton
Master of the Horse
Beefeater
Justice
Son
Constable
Thames
Don Ferolo Whiskerandos

1st Niece
2d Niece
Justice's Lady
Confidante
Tilburina
Guards, Constables, Servants, Chorus, Rivers, Attendants, etc.

[Scene: *London*]

[Time: *Contemporary*]

[DEDICATION]

To Mrs. Greville

Madam,

In requesting your permission to address the following pages to you, which, as they aim themselves to be critical, require every protection and allowance that approving taste or friendly prejudice can give them, I yet ventured to mention no other motive than the gratification of private friendship and esteem. Had I suggested a hope that your implied approbation would give a sanction to their defects, your particular reserve, and dislike to the reputation of critical taste, as well as of poetical talent, would have made you refuse the protection of your name to such a purpose. However, I am not so ungrateful as now to attempt to combat this disposition in you. I shall not here presume to argue that the present state of poetry claims and expects every assistance that taste and example can afford it; nor endeavor to prove that a fastidious concealment of the most elegant productions of judgment and fancy is an ill return for the possession of those endowments. Continue to deceive yourself in the idea that you are known only to be eminently admired and regarded for the valuable qualities that attach private friendships, and the graceful talents that adorn conversation. Enough of what you have written has stolen into full public notice to answer my purpose; and you will, perhaps, be the only person, conversant in elegant literature, who shall read this address and not perceive that by publishing your particular approbation of the following drama, I have a more interested object than to boast the true respect and regard with which

I have the honor to be,
Madam,
Your very sincere,
And obedient humble servant,
R. B. Sheridan

PROLOGUE

By the Honorable Richard Fitzpatrick

The sister Muses, whom these realms obey,
Who o'er the drama hold divided sway,
Sometimes, by evil counsellors, 'tis said,
Like earth-born potentates have been misled.
In those gay days of wickedness and wit,
When Villiers criticised what Dryden writ,
The tragic queen, to please a tasteless crowd,
Had learned to bellow, rant, and roar so loud,
That frightened Nature, her best friend before,
The blust'ring beldam's company forswore.
Her comic sister, who had wit, 'tis true,
With all her merits, had her failings too;
And would sometimes in mirthful moments use
A style too flippant for a well-bred muse.
Then female modesty abashed began
To seek the friendly refuge of the fan;
Awhile behind that slight intrenchment stood,
Till driv'n from thence, she left the stage for good.
In our more pious, and far chaster times,
These sure no longer are the Muse's crimes!
But some complain that, former faults to shun,
The reformation to extremes has run.
The frantic hero's wild delirium past,
Now insipidity succeeds bombast;
So slow Melpomene's[1] cold numbers creep,
Here dulness seems her drowsy court to keep,
And we are scarce awake, whilst you are fast asleep.
Thalia,[2] once so ill-behaved and rude,
Reformed, is now become an arrant prude;
Retailing nightly to the yawning pit
The purest morals, undefiled by wit!
Our author offers, in these motley scenes,
A slight remonstrance to the drama's queens:
Nor let the goddesses be over nice[3];
Free-spoken subjects give the best advice.
Although not quite a novice in his trade,
His cause to-night requires no common aid.
To this, a friendly, just, and pow'rful court,
I come ambassador to beg support.
Can he undaunted brave the critic's rage?
In civil broils with brother bards engage?
Hold forth their errors to the public eye,
Nay more, e'en newspapers themselves defy?
Say, must his single arm encounter all?
By numbers vanquished, e'en the brave may fall;
And though no leader should success distrust,
Whose troops are willing, and whose cause is just;
To bid such hosts of angry foes defiance,
His chief dependence must be, your alliance.

1 The muse of tragedy. 2 The muse of comedy. 3 particular.

ACT I

Scene I. Mr. *and* Mrs. Dangle *at breakfast, and reading newspapers*

Dangle. (*Reading*) "Brutus to Lord North."—"Letter the second on the State of the Army"—Pshaw! "To the first L— dash D. of the A— dash Y."—"Genuine Extract of a Letter from St. Kitt's."—"Coxheath Intelligence."—"It is now confidently asserted that Sir Charles Hardy."—Pshaw!—Nothing but about the fleet and the nation!—and I hate all politics but theatrical politics.—Where's the *Morning Chronicle*?

Mrs. Dangle. Yes, that's your gazette.

Dangle. So! here we have it.—"Theatrical intelligence extraordinary.—We hear there is a new tragedy in rehearsal at Drury Lane Theatre, called the Spanish Armada, said to be written by Mr. Puff, a gentleman well known in the theatrical world: if we may allow ourselves to give credit to the report of the performers, who, truth to say, are in general but indifferent judges, this piece abounds with the most striking and received beauties of modern composition."—So! I am very glad my friend Puff's tragedy is in such forwardness.—Mrs. Dangle, my

dear, you will be very glad to hear that Puff's tragedy— 27

MRS. DANGLE. Lord, Mr. Dangle, why will you plague me about such nonsense?—Now the plays are begun I shall have no peace.—Isn't it sufficient to make yourself ridiculous by your passion for the theatre, without continually teasing me to join you? Why can't you ride your hobby-horse without desiring to place me on a pillion behind you, Mr. Dangle? 36

DANGLE. Nay, my dear, I was only going to read—

MRS. DANGLE. No, no; you will never read anything that's worth listening to:—you hate to hear about your country; there are letters every day with Roman signatures, demonstrating the certainty of an invasion, and proving that the nation is utterly undone.—But you never will read anything to entertain one. 46

DANGLE. What has a woman to do with politics, Mrs. Dangle?

MRS. DANGLE. And what have you to do with the theatre, Mr. Dangle? Why should you affect the character of a critic? I have no patience with you!—haven't you made yourself the jest of all your acquaintance by your interference in matters where you have no business? Are not you called a theatrical quidnunc,[1] and a mock Mæcenas to second-hand authors? 57

DANGLE. True, my power with the managers is pretty notorious; but is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my interest?—From lords to recommend fiddlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get answers, and from actors to get engagements? 64

MRS. DANGLE. Yes, truly; you have contrived to get a share in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit or even the credit of the abuse that attends it. 69

DANGLE. I am sure, Mrs. Dangle, you are no loser by it, however; *you* have all the advantages of it:—mightn't you, last winter, have had the reading of the new pantomime a fortnight previous to its performance? And doesn't Mr. Fosbrook let you take places for a play before it is advertised, and set you down for a box for every new piece through the season? And didn't my friend, Mr. Smatter, dedicate his last farce to you at my particular request, Mrs. Dangle? 81

MRS. DANGLE. Yes; but wasn't the farce damned, Mr. Dangle? And to be sure it is extremely pleasant to have one's house made the motley rendezvous of all the lackeys of literature—the very high 'change of trading authors and jobbing critics!—Yes, my drawing-room is an absolute register-office for candidate actors and poets without character; then to be continually alarmed with misses and ma'ams piping hysteric changes on Juliets and Dorindas, Pollys and Ophelias; and the very furniture trembling at the probationary starts and unprovoked rants of would-be Richards and Hamlets!—And what is worse than all, now that the manager has monopolised the Opera-house, haven't we the signors and signoras calling here, sliding their smooth semibreves, and gargling glib divisions in their outlandish throats—with foreign emissaries and French spies, for aught I know, disguised like fiddlers and figure dancers! 103

DANGLE. Mercy! Mrs. Dangle!

MRS. DANGLE. And to employ yourself so idly at such an alarming crisis as this, too—when, if you had the least spirit, you would have been at the head of one of the Westminster associations,[2] or trailing a volunteer pike in the Artillery Ground!—But you—o'my conscience, I believe if the French were landed to-morrow, your first inquiry would be whether they had brought a theatrical troop with them. 114

DANGLE. Mrs. Dangle, it does not signify—I say the stage is "the mirror of nature," and the actors are "the abstract and brief chronicles of the time";[3]—and, pray, what can a man of sense study better?—Besides, you will not easily persuade me that there is

1 newsmonger.

2 Volunteer militia. 3 Familiar phrases from *Hamlet*.

no credit or importance in being at the head of a band of critics who take upon them to decide for the whole town, whose opinion and patronage all writers solicit, and whose recommendation no manager dares refuse.

MRS. DANGLE. Ridiculous!—Both managers and authors of the least merit laugh at your pretensions.—The *public* is their *critic*[1]—without whose fair approbation they know no play can rest on the stage, and with whose applause they welcome such attacks as yours, and laugh at the malice of them where they can't at the wit.

DANGLE. Very well, madam—very well.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Mr. Sneer, sir, to wait on you.

DANGLE. Oh, show Mr. Sneer up.

Exit Servant

Plague on't! now we must appear loving and affectionate, or Sneer will hitch us into a story.

MRS. DANGLE. With all my heart; you can't be more ridiculous than you are.

DANGLE. You are enough to provoke—

Enter MR. SNEER

Ha! my dear Sneer, I am vastly glad to see you. My dear, here's Mr. Sneer.

MRS. DANGLE. Good morning to you, sir.

DANGLE. Mrs. Dangle and I have been diverting ourselves with the papers. Pray, Sneer, won't you go to Drury Lane Theatre the first night of Puff's tragedy?

SNEER. Yes; but I suppose one sha'n't be able to get in, for on the first night of a new piece they always fill the house with orders to support it. But here, Dangle, I have brought you two pieces, one of which you must exert yourself to make the managers accept, I can tell you that; for 'tis written by a person of consequence.

DANGLE. So! now my plagues are beginning.

SNEER. Aye, I am glad of it, for now you'll be happy. Why, my dear Dangle, it is a pleasure to see how you enjoy your volunteer fatigue and your solicited solicitations.

DANGLE. It's a great trouble—yet, egad, it's pleasant too.—Why, sometimes of a morning I have a dozen people call on me at breakfast-time whose faces I never saw before, nor ever desire to see again.

SNEER. That must be very pleasant, indeed!

DANGLE. And not a week but I receive fifty letters, and not a line in them about any business of my own.

SNEER. An amusing correspondence!

DANGLE. (*Reading*) "Bursts into tears, and exit." What, is this a tragedy?

SNEER. No, that's a genteel comedy, not a translation—only *taken from the French.* It is written in a style which they have lately tried to run down—the true sentimental, and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end.

MRS. DANGLE. Well, if they had kept to that I should not have been such an enemy to the stage; there was some edification to be got from those pieces, Mr. Sneer!

SNEER. I am quite of your opinion, Mrs. Dangle. The theatre, in proper hands, might certainly be made the school of morality; but now, I am sorry to say it, people seem to go there principally for their entertainment!

MRS. DANGLE. It would have been more to the credit of the managers to have kept it in the other line.

SNEER. Undoubtedly, madam; and hereafter, perhaps, to have had it recorded that in the midst of a luxurious and dissipated age they preserved *two* houses in the capital where the conversation was always moral, at least, if not entertaining!

DANGLE. Now, egad, I think the worst alteration is in the nicety of the audience—no double entendre, no smart innuendo admitted; even Vanbrugh and Congreve obliged to undergo a bungling reformation!

SNEER. Yes, and our prudery in this respect is just on a par with the artificial bashfulness of a courtezan, who increases the blush upon her cheek in an exact proportion to the diminution of her modesty.

[1] The general intent of the play.

DANGLE. Sneer can't even give the public a good word!—[*Opening the second manuscript*] But what have we here?—This seems a very odd—

SNEER. Oh, that's a comedy on a very new plan—replete with wit and mirth, yet of a most serious moral! You see it is called *The Reformed Housebreaker*; where, by the mere force of humor, housebreaking is put into so ridiculous a light, that if the piece has its proper run, I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely useless by the end of the season.

DANGLE. Egad, this is new indeed!

SNEER. Yes; it is written by a particular friend of mine who has discovered that the follies and foibles of society are subjects unworthy the notice of the Comic Muse, who should be taught to stoop only at the greater vices and blacker crimes of humanity—gibbeting capital offences in five acts, and pillorying petty larcenies in two.—In short, his idea is to dramatise the penal laws and make the stage a court of ease to the Old Bailey.[1]

DANGLE. It is truly moral.

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir Fretful Plagiary, sir.

DANGLE. Beg him to walk up.

Exit Servant

Now, Mrs. Dangle, Sir Fretful Plagiary is an author to your own taste.

MRS. DANGLE. I confess he is a favorite of mine because everybody else abuses him.

SNEER. Very much to the credit of your charity, madam, if not of your judgment.

DANGLE. But, egad, he allows no merit to any author but himself, that's the truth on't—tho' he's my friend.

SNEER. Never.—He is as envious as an old maid verging on the desperation of six-and-thirty; and then, the insidious humility with which he seduces you to give a free opinion on any of his works, can be exceeded only by the petulant arrogance with which he is sure to reject your observations.

DANGLE. Very true, egad—tho' he's my friend.

SNEER. Then his affected contempt of all newspaper strictures—tho', at the same time, he is the sorest man alive, and shrinks like scorched parchment from the fiery ordeal of true criticism—yet he is so covetous of popularity, that he had rather be abused than not mentioned at all.

DANGLE. There's no denying it—tho' he is my friend.

SNEER. You have read the tragedy he has just finished, haven't you?

DANGLE. Oh, yes; he sent it to me yesterday.

SNEER. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

DANGLE. Why, between ourselves, egad, I must own—tho' he is my friend—that it is one of the most—(*Aside*) He's here—finished and most admirable perform—

SIR FRETFUL. (*Without*) Mr. Sneer with him, did you say?

Enter SIR FRETFUL PLAGIARY

DANGLE. Ah, my dear friend!—Egad, we were just speaking of your tragedy.—Admirable, Sir Fretful, admirable!

SNEER. You never did anything beyond it, Sir Fretful—never in your life.

SIR FRETFUL. You make me extremely happy; for without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there isn't a man in the world whose judgment I value as I do yours—and Mr. Dangle's.

MRS. DANGLE. They are only laughing at you, Sir Fretful; for it was but just now that—

DANGLE. Mrs. Dangle!—Ah, Sir Fretful, you know Mrs. Dangle.—My friend Sneer was rallying just now—He knows how she admires you, and—

SIR FRETFUL. O Lord, I am sure Mr. Sneer has more taste and sincerity than to—(*Aside*) A damned double-faced fellow!

DANGLE. Yes, yes,—Sneer will jest—but a better humored—

SIR FRETFUL. Oh, I know.

DANGLE. He has a ready turn for ridicule—his wit costs him nothing.

SIR FRETFUL. No, egad,—(*Aside*) or I should wonder how he came by it.

[1] The central criminal court.

MRS. DANGLE. Because his jest is always at the expense of his friend.

DANGLE. But, Sir Fretful, have you sent your play to the managers yet?—or can I be of any service to you?

SIR FRETFUL. No, no, I thank you; I believe the piece had sufficient recommendation with it.—I thank you, tho'.—I sent it to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre this morning.

SNEER. I should have thought, now, that it might have been cast (as the actors call it) better at Drury Lane.

SIR FRETFUL. O lud! no—never send a play there while I live—harkee!

(*Whispers to* SNEER)

SNEER. *Writes himself!*[1]—I know he does—

SIR FRETFUL. I say nothing—I take away from no man's merit—am hurt at no man's good fortune—I say nothing.—But this I will say—through all my knowledge of life I have observed—that there is not a passion so strongly rooted in the human heart as envy!

SNEER. I believe you have reason for what you say, indeed.

SIR FRETFUL. Besides—I can tell you it is not always so safe to leave a play in the hands of those who write themselves.

SNEER. What, they may steal from them—hey, my dear Plagiary?

SIR FRETFUL. Steal!—to be sure they may; and, egad, serve your best thoughts as gypsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own.

SNEER. But your present work is a sacrifice to Melpomene, and *he*, you know, never—

SIR FRETFUL. That's no security.—A dext'rous plagiarist may do anything.—Why, sir, for aught I know, he might take out some of the best things in my tragedy, and put them into his own comedy.

SNEER. That might be done, I dare be sworn.

SIR FRETFUL. And then, if such a person gives you the least hint or assistance, he is devilish apt to take the merit of the whole—

DANGLE. If it succeeds.

SIR FRETFUL. Aye; but with regard to this piece, I think I can hit that gentleman, for I can safely swear he never read it.

SNEER. I'll tell you how you may hurt him more.

SIR FRETFUL. How?

SNEER. Swear he wrote it.

SIR FRETFUL. Plague on't now, Sneer, I shall take it ill.—I believe you want to take away my character as an author.

SNEER. Then I am sure you ought to be very much obliged to me.

SIR FRETFUL. Hey!—sir!—

DANGLE. Oh, you know he never means what he says.

SIR FRETFUL. Sincerely, then—you do like the piece?

SNEER. Wonderfully!

SIR FRETFUL. But come now, there must be something that you think might be mended, hey?—Mr. Dangle, has nothing struck you?

DANGLE. Why, faith, it is but an ungracious thing, for the most part, to—

SIR FRETFUL. With most authors it is just so, indeed; they are in general strangely tenacious!—But for my part, I am never so well pleased as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me; for what is the purpose of showing a work to a friend if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?

SNEER. Very true.—Why then, tho' I seriously admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one small objection, which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

SIR FRETFUL. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

SNEER. I think it wants incident.

SIR FRETFUL. Good God! you surprise me!—wants incident!

SNEER. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

SIR FRETFUL. Good God!—Believe me, Mr. Sneer, there is no person for whose judgment I have a more implicit deference. But I protest to you, Mr. Sneer, I am only

[1] Sheridan.

apprehensive that the incidents are too crowded.—My dear Dangle, how does it strike you? 402

DANGLE. Really I can't agree with my friend Sneer.—I think the plot quite sufficient, and the four first acts by many degrees the best I ever read or saw in my life. If I might venture to suggest anything, it is that the interest rather falls off in the fifth.

SIR FRETFUL. Rises, I believe you mean, sir. 410

DANGLE. No, I don't, upon my word.

SIR FRETFUL. Yes, yes, you do, upon my soul—it certainly doesn't[1] fall off, I assure you.—No, no; it doesn't[1] fall off. 414

DANGLE. Now, Mrs. Dangle, didn't you say it struck you in the same light?

MRS. DANGLE. No, indeed, I did not—I did not see a fault in any part of the play, from the beginning to the end. 419

SIR FRETFUL. Upon my soul, the women are the best judges after all!

MRS. DANGLE. Or, if I made any objection, I am sure it was to nothing in the piece, but that I was afraid it was, on the whole, a little too long. 425

SIR FRETFUL. Pray, madam, do you speak as to duration of time, or do you mean that the story is tediously spun out?

MRS. DANGLE. O lud! no.—I speak only with reference to the usual length of acting plays. 431

SIR FRETFUL. Then I am very happy—very happy indeed; because the play is a short play—a remarkably short play.—I should not venture to differ with a lady on a point of taste; but on these occasions, the watch, you know, is the critic. 437

MRS. DANGLE. Then I suppose it must have been Mr. Dangle's drawling manner of reading it to me. 440

SIR FRETFUL. Oh, if Mr. Dangle read it, that's quite another affair!—But I assure you, Mrs. Dangle, the first evening you can spare me three hours and a half, I'll undertake to read you the whole from beginning to end, with the prologue and epilogue, and allow time for the music between the acts.

1Q1 *don't.*

MRS. DANGLE. I hope to see it on the stage next. 449

DANGLE. Well, Sir Fretful, I wish you may be able to get rid as easily of the newspaper criticisms as you do of ours. 452

SIR FRETFUL. The newspapers!—Sir, they are the most villainous—licentious—abominable—infernal—Not that I ever read them—no—I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper. 457

DANGLE. You are quite right, for it certainly must hurt an author of delicate feelings to see the liberties they take. 460

SIR FRETFUL. No! quite the contrary; their abuse is, in fact, the best panegyric—I like it of all things. An author's reputation is only in danger from their support.

SNEER. Why, that's true—and that attack, now, on you the other day— 466

SIR FRETFUL. What? where?

DANGLE. Aye, you mean in a paper of Thursday; it was completely ill-natured, to be sure. 470

SIR FRETFUL. Oh, so much the better.—Ha! ha! ha!—I wouldn't have it otherwise.

DANGLE. Certainly it is only to be laughed at; for— 474

SIR FRETFUL. You don't happen to recollect what the fellow said, do you?

SNEER. Pray, Dangle—Sir Fretful seems a little anxious— 478

SIR FRETFUL. O lud, no!—anxious?—not I—not the least.—I—But one may as well hear, you know.

DANGLE. Sneer, do *you* recollect?—(*Aside*) Make out something. 483

SNEER. I will.—(*To* DANGLE) Yes, yes, I remember perfectly.

SIR FRETFUL. Well, and pray now—not that it signifies—what might the gentleman say? 488

SNEER. Why, he roundly asserts that you have not the slightest invention or original genius whatever—tho' you are the greatest traducer of all other authors living. 492

SIR FRETFUL. Ha! ha! ha!—very good!

SNEER. That as to comedy, you have not one idea of your own, he believes, even in your common-place-book—where stray jokes

and pilfered witticisms are kept with as much method as the ledger of the lost and stolen office.

SIR FRETFUL. Ha! ha! ha!—very pleasant!

SNEER. Nay, that you are so unlucky as not to have the skill even to *steal* with taste; but that you glean from the refuse of obscure volumes, where more judicious plagiarists have been before you, so that the body of your work is a composition of dregs and sediments—like a bad tavern's worst wine.

SIR FRETFUL. Ha! ha!

SNEER. In your more serious efforts, he says, your bombast would be less intolerable if the thoughts were ever suited to the expression; but the homeliness of the sentiment stares thro' the fantastic encumbrance of its fine language, like a clown in one of the new uniforms!

SIR FRETFUL. Ha! ha!

SNEER. That your occasional tropes and flowers suit the general coarseness of your style, as tambour sprigs[1] would a ground of linsey-woolsey; while your imitations of Shakespeare resemble the mimicry of Falstaff's page, and are about as near the standard of the original.

SIR FRETFUL. Ha!—

SNEER. In short, that even the finest passages you steal are of no service to you; for the poverty of your own language prevents their assimilating, so that they lie on the surface like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilise!

SIR FRETFUL. (*After great agitation*)—Now, another person would be vexed at this.

SNEER. Oh! but I wouldn't have told you, only to divert you.

SIR FRETFUL. I know it—I *am* diverted—Ha! ha! ha!—not the least invention!—Ha! ha! ha! very good!—very good!

SNEER. Yes—no genius! Ha! ha! ha!

DANGLE. A severe rogue! Ha! ha! ha! But you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read such nonsense.

SIR FRETFUL. To be sure: for if there is anything to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it; and if it is abuse,—why, one is always sure to hear of it from one damned good-natured friend or another!

Enter Servant

SERVANT. Sir, there is an Italian gentleman, with a French interpreter and three young ladies and a dozen musicians, who say they are sent by Lady Rondeau and Mrs. Fuge.

DANGLE. Gadso! they come by appointment. Dear Mrs. Dangle, do let them know I'll see them directly.

MRS. DANGLE. You know, Mr. Dangle, I sha'n't understand a word they say.

DANGLE. But you hear there's an interpreter.

MRS. DANGLE. Well, I'll try to endure their complaisance till you come. *Exit*

SERVANT. And Mr. Puff, sir, has sent word that the last rehearsal is to be this morning, and that he'll call on you presently.

DANGLE. That's true—I shall certainly be at home.

Exit Servant

—Now, Sir Fretful, if you have a mind to have justice done you in the way of answer, egad, Mr. Puff's your man.

SIR FRETFUL. Pshaw! Sir, why should I wish to have it answered when I tell you I am pleased at it?

DANGLE. True, I had forgot that. But I hope you are not fretted at what Mr. Sneer—

SIR FRETFUL. Zounds! no, Mr. Dangle; don't I tell you these things never fret me in the least?

DANGLE. Nay, I only thought—

SIR FRETFUL. And let me tell you, Mr. Dangle, 'tis damned affronting in you to suppose that I am hurt when I tell you I am not.

SNEER. But why so warm, Sir Fretful?

SIR FRETFUL. Gad's life! Mr. Sneer, you are as absurd as Dangle. How often must I repeat it to you, that nothing can vex me but your supposing it possible for me to mind the damned nonsense you have been repeating to me?—And let me tell you, if you

[1] Done in fine needlework.

continue to believe this, you must mean to insult me, gentlemen—and then your disrespect will affect me no more than the newspaper criticisms—and I shall treat it with exactly the same calm indifference and philosophic contempt—and so your servant.

Exit

SNEER. Ha! ha! ha! Poor Sir Fretful! Now will he go and vent his philosophy in anonymous abuse of all modern critics and authors.—But, Dangle, you must get your friend Puff to take me to the rehearsal of his tragedy.

DANGLE. I'll answer for it, he'll thank you for desiring it. But come and help me to judge of this musical family; they are recommended by people of consequence, I assure you.

SNEER. I am at your disposal the whole morning, but I thought you had been a decided critic in music as well as in literature.

DANGLE. So I am—but I have a bad ear. I'faith, Sneer, tho', I am afraid we were a little too severe on Sir Fretful—tho' he is my friend.

SNEER. Why, 'tis certain that unnecessarily to mortify the vanity of any writer is a cruelty which mere dulness never can deserve; but where a base and personal malignity usurps the place of literary emulation, the aggressor deserves neither quarter nor pity.

DANGLE. That's true, egad!—tho' he's my friend!

SCENE II. *A drawing-room, harpsichord, etc.; Italian family, French* Interpreter, MRS. DANGLE *and* Servants *discovered*

INTERPRETER. Je dis, madame, j'ai l'honneur to *introduce* et de vous demander votre protection pour le Signor Pasticcio Retornello et pour sa charmante famille.

SIGNOR PASTICCIO. Ah! Vosignoria, noi vi preghiamo di favoritevi colla vostra protezione.

1ST DAUGHTER. Vosignoria fatevi questi grazzie.

2D DAUGHTER. Si, signora.

INTERPRETER. Madame—*me interpret.*—C'est à dire—in English—qu'ils vous prient de leur faire l'honneur—

MRS. DANGLE. I say again, gentlemen, I don't understand a word you say.

SIGNOR PASTICCIO. Questo signore spiegheró—

INTERPRETER. Oui—*me interpret.*—Nous avons les lettres de recommendation pour Monsieur Dangle de—

MRS. DANGLE. Upon my word, sir, I don't understand you.

SIGNOR PASTICCIO. La Contessa Rondeau e nostra padrona.

3D DAUGHTER. Si, padre, et mi Ladi Fuge.

INTERPRETER. O!—*me interpret.*—Madame, ils disent—in English—qu'ils ont l'honneur d'être protégés de ces dames.—*You understand?*

MRS. DANGLE. No, sir,—no understand!

Enter DANGLE *and* SNEER

INTERPRETER. Ah voici, Monsieur Dangle!

ALL ITALIANS. A! Signor Dangle!

MRS. DANGLE. Mr. Dangle, here are two very civil gentlemen trying to make themselves understood, and I don't know which is the interpreter.

DANGLE. Eh, bien!

INTERPRETER. Monsieur Dangle, le grand bruit de vos talents pour la critique, et de votre intérêt avec Messieurs les Directeurs à tous les théâtres—

SIGNOR PASTICCIO. Vosignoria flete si famoso par la vostra conoscensa, e vostra interessa colla le Direttore da—

(Speaking together)

DANGLE. Egad, I think the interpreter is the hardest to be understood of the two!

SNEER. Why I thought, Dangle, you had been an admirable linguist!

DANGLE. So I am, if they would not talk so damn'd fast.

SNEER. Well, I'll explain that; the less time we lose in hearing them the better—for that, I suppose, is what they are brought here for.

(SNEER *speaks to* SIGNOR PASTICCIO. *They sing trios, etc.,* DANGLE *beating out of time*)

Servant *enters and whispers* DANGLE

DANGLE. Show him up.

Exit Servant

Bravo! admirable! bravissimo! admirablissimo!—Ah! Sneer! where will you find such as these voices in England?

SNEER. Not easily. 59

DANGLE. But Puff is coming. Signor and little Signora's obligatissimo!—Sposa Signora Danglena. Mrs. Dangle, shall I beg you to offer them some refreshments, and take their address in the next room. 64

Exit MRS. DANGLE *with the Italians and* Interpreter *ceremoniously*

Re-enter Servant

SERVANT. Mr. Puff, sir.

Enter PUFF

DANGLE. My dear Puff!

PUFF. My dear Dangle, how is it with you?

DANGLE. Mr. Sneer, give me leave to introduce Mr. Puff to you. 70

PUFF. Mr. Sneer is this?—Sir, he is a gentleman whom I have long panted for the honor of knowing—a gentleman whose critical talents and transcendent judgment—

SNEER. Dear sir— 75

DANGLE. Nay, don't be modest, Sneer; my friend Puff only talks to you in the style of his profession.

SNEER. His profession! 79

PUFF. Yes, sir; I make no secret of the trade I follow: among friends and brother authors, Dangle knows I love to be frank on the subject, and to advertise myself *vivâ voce*.—I am, sir, a practitioner in panegyric, or, to speak more plainly, a professor of the art of puffing, at your service—or anybody else's. 87

SNEER. Sir, you are very obliging!—I believe, Mr. Puff, I have often admired your talents in the daily prints.

PUFF. Yes, sir, I flatter myself I do as much business in that way as any six of the fraternity in town.—Devilish hard work all the summer.—Friend Dangle, never worked harder!—But, harkee,—the winter managers were a little sore, I believe. 96

DANGLE. No; I believe they took it all in good part.

PUFF. Aye!—then that must have been affectation in them; for, egad, there were some of the attacks which there was no laughing at! 102

SNEER. Aye, the humorous ones.—But I should think, Mr. Puff, that authors would in general be able to do this sort of work for themselves. 106

PUFF. Why, yes—but in a clumsy way; besides, we look on that as an encroachment, and so take the opposite side. I dare say, now, you conceive half the very civil paragraphs and advertisements you see to be written by the parties concerned or their friends?—No such thing—nine out of ten manufactured by me in the way of business.

SNEER. Indeed! 115

PUFF. Even the auctioneers now—the auctioneers, I say—tho' the rogues have lately got some credit for their language—not an article of the merit theirs; take them out of their pulpits, and they are as dull as catalogues!—No, sir; 'twas I first enriched their style—'twas I first taught them to crowd their advertisements with panegyrical superlatives, each epithet rising above the other, like the bidders in their own auction-rooms!—From me they learned to inlay their phraseology with variegated chips of exotic metaphor; by me, too, their inventive faculties were called forth.—Yes, sir, by me they were instructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits; to insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves; to teach courteous shrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful soil, or on emergencies to raise upstart oaks where there never had been an acorn; to create a delightful vicinage without the assistance of a neighbor or fix the temple of Hygeia[1] in the fens of Lincolnshire!

DANGLE. I am sure you have done them infinite service; for now, when a gentleman is ruined, he parts with his house with some credit. 142

[1] The goddess of health.

SNEER. Service!—if they had any gratitude they would erect a statue to him; they would figure him as a presiding Mercury, the god of traffic and fiction, with a hammer in his hand instead of a caduceus. But pray, Mr. Puff, what first put you on exercising your talents in this way?

PUFF. Egad, sir, sheer necessity—the proper parent of an art so nearly allied to invention. You must know, Mr. Sneer, that from the first time I tried my hand at an advertisement, my success was such, that for some time after I led a most extraordinary life indeed.

SNEER. How, pray?

PUFF. Sir, I supported myself two years entirely by my misfortunes.

SNEER. By your misfortunes?

PUFF. Yes, sir, assisted by long sickness and other occasional disorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

SNEER. From sickness and misfortunes! You practised as a doctor and an attorney at once?

PUFF. No, egad; both maladies and miseries were my own.

SNEER. Hey!—what the plague!

DANGLE. 'Tis true, i'faith.

PUFF. Harkee!—By advertisements—"To the charitable and humane!" and "to those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence!"

SNEER. Oh, I understand you.

PUFF. And, in truth, I deserved what I got; for I suppose never man went through such a series of calamities in the same space of time. Sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a state of affluence by a train of unavoidable misfortunes. Then, sir, though a very industrious tradesman, I was twice burnt out, and lost my little all both times; I lived upon those fires a month. I soon after was confined by a most excruciating disorder, and lost the use of my limbs. That told very well; for I had the case strongly attested, and went about to collect the subscriptions myself.

DANGLE. Egad, I believe that was when you first called on me.

PUFF. In November last? Oh, no; I was at that time a close prisoner in the Marshalsea, for a debt benevolently contracted to serve a friend. I was afterwards twice tapped for a dropsy, which declined into a very profitable consumption. I was then reduced to—oh, no!—then I became a widow with six helpless children, after having had eleven husbands pressed,[1] and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into an hospital!

SNEER. And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt?

PUFF. Why, yes, though I made some occasional attempts at *felo de se*;[2] but as I did not find those *rash actions* answer, I left off killing myself very soon. Well, sir,—at last, what with bankruptcies, fires, gouts, dropsies, imprisonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handsome sum, I determined to quit a business which had always gone rather against my conscience, and in a more liberal way still to indulge my talents for fiction and embellishment, through my favorite channels of diurnal communication.—And so, sir, you have my history.

SNEER. Most obligingly communicative, indeed; and your confession, if published, might certainly serve the cause of true charity, by rescuing the most useful channels of appeal to benevolence from the cant of imposition.—But surely, Mr. Puff, there is no great mystery in your present profession!

PUFF. Mystery, sir! I will take upon me to say the matter was never scientifically treated, nor reduced to rule before.

SNEER. Reduced to rule!

PUFF. O lud, sir, you are very ignorant, I am afraid.—Yes, sir. Puffing is of various sorts; the principal are, the puff direct, the puff preliminary, the puff collateral, the puff collusive, and the puff oblique, or puff by implication. These all assume, as circumstances require, the various forms of letter to the editor, occasional anecdote, impartial

1 Impressed for sea service.
2 Lit. "felon of himself"; equals "a suicide."

critique, observation from correspondent, or advertisement from the party.

SNEER. The puff direct, I can conceive—

PUFF. Oh, yes, that's simple enough; for instance, a new comedy or farce is to be produced at one of the theatres (though by the by they don't bring out half what they ought to do)—the author, suppose Mr. Smatter, or Mr. Dapper, or any particular friend of mine. Very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received; I have the plot from the author, and only add—"characters strongly drawn"—"highly colored"—"hand of a master"—"fund of genuine humor"—"mine of invention"—"neat dialogue"—"Attic salt." Then for the performance—"Mr. Dodd[1] was astonishingly great in the character of Sir Harry"; "that universal and judicious actor, Mr. Palmer, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the Colonel";—"but it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. King: indeed he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience." As to the scenery—"the miraculous powers of Mr. De Loutherbourg's pencil are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most, the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers."

SNEER. That's pretty well indeed, sir.

PUFF. Oh, cool—quite cool, to what I sometimes do.

SNEER. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

PUFF. O lud, yes, sir. The number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed.

SNEER. Well, sir,—the puff preliminary?

PUFF. Oh, that, sir, does well in the form of a caution. In a matter of gallantry now—Sir Flimsy Gossimer wishes to be well with Lady Fanny Fete. He applies to me—I open trenches for him with a paragraph in the *Morning Post*.—"It is recommended to the beautiful and accomplished Lady F four stars F dash E to be on her guard against that dangerous character, Sir F dash G; who, however pleasing and insinuating his manners may be, is certainly not remarkable for the *constancy of his attachments*!"—in italics. Here, you see, Sir Flimsy Gossimer is introduced to the particular notice of Lady Fanny, who perhaps never thought of him before. She finds herself publicly cautioned to avoid him, which naturally makes her desirous of seeing him. The observation of their acquaintance causes a pretty kind of mutual embarrassment; this produces a sort of sympathy of interest, which, if Sir Flimsy is unable to improve effectually, he at least gains the credit of having their names mentioned together, by a particular set, and in a particular way—which nine times out of ten is the full accomplishment of modern gallantry.

DANGLE. Egad, Sneer, you will be quite an adept in the business.

PUFF. Now, sir, the puff collateral is much used as an appendage to advertisements, and may take the form of anecdote. "Yesterday, as the celebrated George Bonmot was sauntering down St. James's Street, he met the lively Lady Mary Myrtle coming out of the Park:—'Good God, Lady Mary, I'm surprised to meet you in a white jacket, for I expected never to have seen you but in a full-trimmed uniform and a light horseman's cap!'—'Heavens, George, where could you have learned that?'—'Why,' replied the wit, 'I just saw a print of you in a new publication called the *Camp Magazine*—which, by the by, is a devilish clever thing, and is sold at No. 3, on the right hand of the way, two doors from the printing-office, the corner of Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, price only one shilling!'"

SNEER. Very ingenious indeed!

PUFF. But the puff collusive is the newest of any; for it acts in the disguise of determined hostility. It is much used by bold booksellers and enterprising poets. "An indignant correspondent observes, that the new poem called Beelzebub's 'Cotillion,' or Pros-

[1] See note on the Dramatis Personæ.

erpine's 'Fête Champêtre,' is one of the most unjustifiable performances he ever read. The severity with which certain characters are handled is quite shocking; and as there are many descriptions in it too warmly colored for female delicacy, the shameful avidity with which this piece is bought by all people of fashion is a reproach on the taste of the times, and a disgrace to the delicacy of the age." Here you see, the two strongest inducements are held forth:—first, that nobody ought to read it; and, secondly, that everybody buys it; on the strength of which the publisher boldly prints the tenth edition, before he had sold ten of the first; and then establishes it by threatening himself with the pillory, or absolutely indicting himself for scan. mag.[1] 353

DANGLE. Ha! ha! ha!—'Gad, I know it is so.

PUFF. As to the puff oblique, or puff by implication, it is too various and extensive to be illustrated by an instance. It attracts in titles and presumes in patents; it lurks in the *limitation* of a subscription, and invites in the assurance of crowd and incommodation at public places; it delights to draw forth concealed merit, with a most disinterested assiduity; and sometimes wears a countenance of smiling censure and tender reproach. It has a wonderful memory for parliamentary debates, and will often give the whole speech of a favored member with the most flattering accuracy. But, above all, it is a great dealer in reports and suppositions. It has the earliest intelligence of intended preferments that will reflect *honor* on the *patrons*, and embryo promotions of modest gentlemen, who know nothing of the matter themselves. It can hint a ribband for implied services, in the air of a common report, and with the carelessness of a casual paragraph, suggest officers into commands to which they have no pretension but their wishes. This, sir, is the last principal class of the art of puffing—an art which I hope you will now agree with me is of the highest dignity, yielding a tablature of benevolence and public spirit; befriending equally trade, gallantry, criticism, and politics:—the applause of genius—the register of charity—the triumph of heroism—the self-defence of contractors—the fame of orators—and the gazette of ministers! 389

SNEER. Sir, I am completely a convert both to the importance and ingenuity of your profession; and now, sir, there is but one thing which can possibly increase my respect for you, and that is, your permitting me to be present this morning at the rehearsal of your new trage— 396

PUFF. Hush, for Heaven's sake!—*My* tragedy!—Egad, Dangle, I take this very ill; you know how apprehensive I am of being known to be the author. 400

DANGLE. I'faith, I would not have told—but it's in the papers, and your name at length in the *Morning Chronicle*.

PUFF. Ah! those damned editors never can keep a secret!—Well, Mr. Sneer, no doubt you will do me great honor—I shall be infinitely happy—highly flattered—

DANGLE. I believe it must be near the time; shall we go together? 409

PUFF. No, it will not be yet this hour, for they are always late at that theatre; besides, I must meet you there, for I have some little matters here to send to the papers, and a few paragraphs to scribble before I go.—(*Looking at memorandums*)—Here is "a conscientious Baker, on the Subject of the Army Bread"; and "a Detester of visible Brick-work, in favor of the new-invented Stucco"—both in the style of Junius, and promised for to-morrow. The Thames navigation, too, is at a stand. Misomud, or Anti-shoal, must go to work again directly.—Here too are some political memorandums—I see; aye—To take Paul Jones, and get the Indiamen[2] out of the Shannon—reinforce Byron—compel the Dutch to—so!—I must do that in the evening papers, or reserve it for the *Morning Herald*; for I know that I have undertaken to-morrow, besides, to establish the unanimity of the fleet

1 I.e. *scandalum magnatum*; equals "slander of the magnates, or peers."

2 merchantmen.

in the *Public Advertiser*, and to shoot Charles Fox in the *Morning Post*.—So, egad, I ha'n't a moment to lose!

DANGLE. Well!—we'll meet in the green-room. *Exeunt severally*

ACT II

SCENE I. *The theatre*

Enter DANGLE, PUFF, *and* SNEER, *as before the curtain*

PUFF. No, no, sir. What Shakespeare says of actors may be better applied to the purpose of plays; *they* ought to be "the abstract and brief chronicles of the times." Therefore, when history, and particularly the history of our own country, furnishes anything like a case in point, to the time in which an author writes, if he knows his own interest, he will take advantage of it. So, sir, I call my tragedy *The Spanish Armada*, and have laid the scene before Tilbury Fort.[1]

SNEER. A most happy thought, certainly!

DANGLE. Egad, it was—I told you so. But pray now, I don't understand how you have contrived to introduce any love into it.

PUFF. Love!—Oh, nothing so easy; for it is a received point among poets, that where history gives you a good heroic outline for a play, you may fill up with a little love at your own discretion: in doing which, nine times out of ten, you only make up a deficiency in the private history of the times. Now, I rather think I have done this with some success.

SNEER. No scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope?

PUFF. O lud! no, no;—I only suppose the governor of Tilbury Fort's daughter to be in love with the son of the Spanish admiral.

SNEER. Oh, is that all!

DANGLE. Excellent, i'faith! I see it at once.—But won't this appear rather improbable?

PUFF. To be sure it will—but, what the plague! a play is not to show occurrences that happen every day, but things just so strange, that though they never *did*, they might happen.

SNEER. Certainly nothing is unnatural that is not physically impossible.

PUFF. Very true; and for that matter Don Ferolo Whiskerandos—for that's the lover's name—might have been over here in the train of the Spanish ambassador; or Tilburina, for that is the lady's name, might have been in love with him from having heard his character or seen his picture, or from knowing that he was the last man in the world she ought to be in love with—or for any other good female reason.—However, sir, the fact is, that though she is but a knight's daughter, egad! she is in love like any princess!

DANGLE. Poor young lady! I feel for her already! for I can conceive how great the conflict must be between her passion and her duty—her love for her country, and her love for Don Ferolo Whiskerandos!

PUFF. Oh, amazing!—her poor susceptible heart is swayed to and fro, by contending passions, like—

Enter Under Prompter

UNDER PROMPTER. Sir, the scene is set, and everything is ready to begin, if you please.

PUFF. Egad, then we'll lose no time.

UNDER PROMPTER. Tho' I believe, sir, you will find it very short, for all the performers have profited by the kind permission you granted them.

PUFF. Hey! what?

UNDER PROMPTER. You know, sir, you gave them leave to cut out or omit whatever they found heavy or unnecessary to the plot, and I must own they have taken very liberal advantage of your indulgence.

PUFF. Well, well!—They are in general very good judges, and I know I am luxuriant.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

UNDER PROMPTER. (*To the music*) Gentlemen, will you play a few bars of something, just to—

[1] Twenty miles east of London.

PUFF. Aye, that's right; for as we have the scenes and dresses, egad, we'll go to't as if it was the first night's performance.—But you need not mind stopping between the acts.—
Exit Under Prompter
(*Orchestra play—then the bell rings*)
Soh! stand clear, gentlemen. Now you know there will be a cry of down! down!—hats off!—silence!—Then up curtain, and let us see what our painters have done for us. 89

SCENE II. *The curtain rises and discovers Tilbury Fort. Two* Sentinels *asleep*

DANGLE. Tilbury Fort!—very fine indeed!

PUFF. Now, what do you think I open with?

SNEER. Faith, I can't guess— 5

PUFF. A clock—Hark!—(*Clock strikes*)—I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the audience—it also marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere. 12

DANGLE. But, pray, are the sentinels to be asleep?

PUFF. Fast as watchmen.

SNEER. Isn't that odd though at such an alarming crisis? 17

PUFF. To be sure it is, but smaller things must give way to a striking scene at the opening; that's a rule. And the case is, that two great men are coming to this very spot to begin the piece. Now, it is not to be supposed they would open their lips if these fellows were watching them; so, egad, I must either have sent them off their posts or set them asleep. 26

SNEER. Oh, that accounts for it.—But tell us, who are these coming?—

PUFF. These are they—Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Christopher Hatton. You'll know Sir Christopher by his turning out his toes—famous, you know, for his dancing. I like to preserve all the little traits of character.—Now attend. 34

Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH *and* SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. True, gallant Raleigh!—

DANGLE. What, they had been talking before?

PUFF. Oh, yes—all the way as they came along.—(*To the* Actors) I beg pardon, gentlemen—but these are particular friends of mine, whose remarks may be of great service to us.—(*To* SNEER *and* DANGLE) Don't mind interrupting them whenever anything strikes you. 44

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. True, gallant Raleigh!
But oh, thou champion of thy country's fame,
There *is* a question which I yet must ask;
A question which I never asked before—
What mean these mighty armaments? 49
This general muster? and this throng of chiefs?

SNEER. Pray, Mr. Puff, how came Sir Christopher Hatton never to ask that question before?

PUFF. What, before the play began?—how the plague could he? 55

DANGLE. That's true, i'faith!

PUFF. But you will hear what he thinks of the matter.

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Alas! my noble friend, when I behold
Yon tented plains in martial symmetry 60
Arrayed; when I count o'er yon glittering lines
Of crested warriors, where the proud steeds' neigh,
And valor-breathing trumpet's shrill appeal,
Responsive vibrate on my list'ning ear;
When virgin majesty herself I view, 65
Like her protecting Pallas, veiled in steel,
With graceful confidence exhort to arms!
When briefly all I hear or see bears stamp
Of martial vigilance and stern defence,
I cannot but surmise—forgive, my friend, 70
If the conjecture's rash—I cannot but
Surmise the State some danger apprehends!

SNEER. A very cautious conjecture that.

PUFF. Yes, that's his character—not to give an opinion but on secure grounds.—Now then! 76

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. O most accomplished Christopher—

PUFF. He calls him by his Christian name, to show that they are on the most familiar terms.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. O most accomplished Christopher, I find
Thy stanch sagacity still tracks the future
In the fresh print of the o'ertaken past.

PUFF. Figurative!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. Thy fears are just.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. But where? whence? when? and what
The danger is,—methinks I fain would learn.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. You know, my friend, scarce two revolving suns,
And three revolving moons, have closed their course,
Since haughty Philip, in despite of peace,
With hostile hand hath struck at England's trade.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. I know it well.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. Philip, you know, is proud Iberia's king.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. He is.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. His subjects in base bigotry
And Catholic oppression held; while we,
You know, the Protestant persuasion hold.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. We do.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. You know, beside, his boasted armament,
The famed Armada, by the Pope baptized,
With purpose to invade these realms—
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Is sailed;
Our last advices so report.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. While the Iberian admiral's chief hope,
His darling son—
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Ferolo Whiskerandos hight—
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. The same—by chance a pris'ner hath been ta'en,
And in this fort of Tilbury—
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Is now
Confined;—'tis true, and oft from yon tall turret's top
I've marked the youthful Spaniard's haughty mien
Unconquered, tho' in chains.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. You also know—

DANGLE. Mr. Puff, as he *knows* all this, why does Sir Walter go on telling him?

PUFF. But the audience are not supposed to know anything of the matter, are they?

SNEER. True; but I think you manage ill, for there certainly appears no reason why Sir Walter should be so communicative.

PUFF. Fore Gad, now, that is one of the most ungrateful observations I ever heard! For the less inducement he has to tell all this, the more, I think, you ought to be obliged to him; for I am sure you'd know nothing of the matter without it.

DANGLE. That's very true, upon my word.

PUFF. But you will find he was *not* going on.

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Enough, enough!—
'tis plain—and I no more
Am in amazement lost!—

PUFF. Here, now you see, Sir Christopher did not in fact ask any one question for his own information.

SNEER. No, indeed; his has been a most disinterested curiosity!

DANGLE. Really, I find, we are very much obliged to them both.

PUFF. To be sure you are.—Now then for the commander-in-chief, the Earl of Leicester, who, you know, was no favorite but of the Queen's.—[*To the* Players] We left off —"in amazement lost!"

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Am in amazement lost.—
But see where noble Leicester comes! supreme
In honors and command.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH. And yet, methinks,
At such a time, so perilous, so feared,
That staff might well become an abler grasp.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. And so, by Heav'n! think I.—But soft, he's here!

PUFF. Aye, they envy him.

SNEER. But who are these with him?

PUFF. Oh! very valiant knights; one is the governor of the fort, the other the Master of the Horse.—And now, I think, you shall hear some better language. I was obliged to be plain and intelligible in the first scene, be-

cause there was so much matter of fact in it; but now, i'faith, you have trope, figure, and metaphor, as plenty as noun-substantives.

Enter Earl of LEICESTER, *the* Governor, *and others*

LEICESTER. How's this, my friends! is't thus your new-fledged zeal
And plumèd valor moulds in roosted sloth?
Why dimly glimmers that heroic flame,
Whose redd'ning blaze, by patriot spirit fed,
Should be the beacon of a kindling realm?
Can the quick current of a patriot heart
Thus stagnate in a cold and weedy converse,
Or freeze in tideless inactivity?
No! rather let the fountain of your valor
Spring thro' each stream of enterprise,
Each petty channel of conducive daring,
Till the full torrent of your foaming wrath
O'erwhelm the flats of sunk hostility!

PUFF. There it is—followed up!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. No more! the fresh'ning breath of thy rebuke
Hath filled the swelling canvas of our souls!
And thus, though fate should cut the cable of
(*All take hands*)
Our topmost hopes, in friendship's closing line
We'll grapple with despair; and if we fall,
We'll fall in Glory's wake!

LEICESTER. There spoke old England's genius! Then are we all resolved?

ALL. We are—all resolved.

LEICESTER. To conquer—or be free?

ALL. To conquer, or be free.

LEICESTER. All?

ALL. All.

DANGLE. *Nem. con.*,[1] egad!

PUFF. Oh, yes; where they *do* agree on the stage, their unanimity is wonderful.

LEICESTER. Then, let's embrace—and now—

SNEER. What the plague, is he going to pray?

PUFF. Yes; hush! In great emergencies there is nothing like a prayer.

LEICESTER. O mighty Mars!

DANGLE. But why should he pray to *Mars*?

PUFF. Hush!

[1] I. e. *nemine contradicente*; equals "unanimously."

LEICESTER. If in thy homage bred,
Each point of discipline I've still observed;
Nor but by due promotion, and the right
Of service, to the rank of major-general
Have risen; assist thy votary now!

GOVERNOR. Yet do not rise,—hear me!

MASTER OF HORSE. And me!

KNIGHT. And me!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. And me!

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. And me!

PUFF. Now, pray all together.

ALL. Behold thy votaries submissive beg,
That thou wilt deign to grant them all they ask;
Assist them to accomplish all their ends,
And sanctify whatever means they use
To gain them!

SNEER. A very orthodox quintetto!

PUFF. Vastly well, gentlemen.—Is that well managed or not? Have you such a prayer as that on the stage?

SNEER. Not exactly.

LEICESTER. (*To* PUFF)—But, sir, you haven't settled how we are to get off here.

PUFF. You could not go off kneeling, could you?

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. (*To* PUFF)—Oh, no, sir; impossible!

PUFF. It would have a good effect, i'faith, if you could!—exeunt praying!—Yes, and would vary the established mode of springing off with a glance at the pit.

SNEER. Oh, never mind; so as you get them off, I'll answer for it the audience won't care how.

PUFF. Well, then, repeat the last line standing, and go off the old way.

ALL. And sanctify whatever means we use
To gain them. *Exeunt*

DANGLE. Bravo! a fine exit.

SNEER. Well, really, Mr. Puff—

PUFF. Stay a moment.

(*The* Sentinels *get up*)

1ST SENTINEL. All this shall to Lord Burleigh's ear.

2D SENTINEL. 'Tis meet it should.

Exeunt Sentinels

DANGLE. Hey!—why, I thought those fellows had been asleep!

PUFF. Only a pretence; there's the art of it. They were spies of Lord Burleigh's.

SNEER. But isn't it odd they were never taken notice of, not even by the commander-in-chief?

PUFF. O lud, sir, if people who want to listen, or overhear, were not always connived at in a tragedy, there would be no carrying on any plot in the world.

DANGLE. That's certain!

PUFF. But take care, my dear Dangle; the morning gun is going to fire.

(*Cannon fires*)

DANGLE. Well, that will have a fine effect.

PUFF. I think so, and helps to realise[1] the scene.—(*Cannon twice*)—What the plague!—*three* morning guns?—There never is but one!—Aye, this is always the way at the theatre; give these fellows a good thing, and they never know when to have done with it.—You have no more cannon to fire?

PROMPTER. (*From within*) No, sir.

PUFF. Now, then, for soft music.

SNEER. Pray, what's that for?

PUFF. It shows that Tilburina is coming; nothing introduces you a heroine like soft music. Here she comes.

DANGLE. And her confidante, I suppose?

PUFF. To be sure. Here they are—inconsolable to the minuet in *Ariadne*.[2]

(*Soft music*)

Enter TILBURINA *and* Confidante

TILBURINA. Now has the whispering breath of gentle morn
Bade Nature's voice and Nature's beauty rise;
While orient Phœbus, with unborrowed hues,
Clothes the waked loveliness which all night slept
In heav'nly drapery! Darkness is fled.
Now flowers unfold their beauties to the sun,
And, blushing, kiss the beam he sends to wake them—
The striped carnation and the guarded rose,
The vulgar wallflower and smart gillyflower,
The polyanthus mean—the dapper daisy,
Sweet William, and sweet marjoram,—and all
The tribe of single and of double pinks!
Now, too, the feathered warblers tune their notes
Around, and charm the list'ning grove. The lark!
The linnet! chaffinch! bullfinch! goldfinch! greenfinch!
—But oh, to me no joy can they afford!
Nor rose, nor wallflower, nor smart gillyflower,
Nor polyanthus mean, nor dapper daisy,
Nor William sweet, nor marjoram—nor lark,
Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove!

PUFF. Your white handkerchief, madam—

TILBURINA. I thought, sir, I wasn't to use that till "heart-rending woe."

PUFF. O yes, madam, at "the finches of the grove," if you please.

TILBURINA. Nor lark,
Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove! (*Weeps*)

PUFF. Vastly well, madam!

DANGLE. Vastly well, indeed!

TILBURINA. For, oh, too sure, heart-rending woe is now
The lot of wretched Tilburina!

DANGLE. Oh!—'tis too much.

SNEER. Oh!—it is, indeed.

CONFIDANTE. Be comforted, sweet lady; for who knows
But Heav'n has yet some milk-white day in store?

TILBURINA. Alas! my gentle Nora,
Thy tender youth as yet hath never mourned
Love's fatal dart. Else wouldst thou know that when
The soul is sunk in comfortless despair
It cannot taste of merriment.

DANGLE. That's certain.

CONFIDANTE. But see! where your stern father comes:
It is not meet that he should find you thus.

PUFF. Hey, what the plague!—what a cut is here!—why, what is become of the description of her first meeting with Don Whiskerandos? his gallant behavior in the sea fight, and the simile of the canary bird?

[1] make real.
[2] An Italian opera, the music by Händel.

TILBURINA. Indeed, sir, you'll find they will not be missed.

PUFF. Very well—very well!

TILBURINA. The cue, ma'am, if you please.

CONFIDANTE. It is not meet that he should find you thus.

TILBURINA. Thou counsel'st right; but 'tis no easy task
For barefaced grief to wear a mask of joy.

Enter Governor

GOVERNOR. How's this!—in tears?—O Tilburina, shame!
Is this a time for maudling tenderness
And Cupid's baby woes?—hast thou not heard
That haughty Spain's pope-consecrated fleet
Advances to our shores, while England's fate,
Like a clipped guinea, trembles in the scale?

TILBURINA. Then is the crisis of *my* fate at hand!
I see the fleet's approach—I see—

PUFF. Now, pray, gentlemen, mind. This is one of the most useful figures we tragedy writers have, by which a hero or heroine, in consideration of their being often obliged to overlook things that *are* on the stage, is allowed to hear and see a number of things that are not.

SNEER. Yes; a kind of poetical second-sight!

PUFF. Yes.—Now then, madam.

TILBURINA. I see their decks
Are cleared—I see the signal made!
The line is formed!—a cable's length asunder!—
I see the frigates stationed in the rear;
And now, I hear the thunder of the guns!
I hear the victor's shouts!—I also hear
The vanquished groan!—and now 'tis smoke—and now
I see the loose sails shiver in the wind!
I see—I see—what soon you'll see—

GOVERNOR. Hold, daughter! peace! this love hath turned thy brain:
The Spanish fleet thou *canst* not see—because
—It is not yet in sight!

DANGLE. Egad, tho', the governor seems to make no allowance for this poetical figure you talk of.

PUFF. No, a plain matter-of-fact man;—that's his character.

TILBURINA. But will you then refuse his offer?

GOVERNOR. I must—I will—I can—I ought—I do.

TILBURINA. Think what a noble price.

GOVERNOR. No more—you urge in vain.

TILBURINA. His liberty is all he asks—

SNEER. All *who* asks, Mr. Puff? Who is—

PUFF. Egad, sir, I can't tell; here has been such cutting and slashing, I don't know where they have got to myself.

TILBURINA. Indeed, sir, you will find it will connect very well.

—And your reward secure.

PUFF. Oh, if they hadn't been so devilish free with their cutting here, you would have found that Don Whiskerandos has been tampering for his liberty, and has persuaded Tilburina to make this proposal to her father; and now, pray, observe the conciseness with which the argument is conducted. Egad, the *pro* and *con* goes as smart as hits in a fencing-match. It is, indeed, a sort of small-sword logic, which we have borrowed from the French.

TILBURINA. A retreat in Spain!

GOVERNOR. Outlawry here!

TILBURINA. Your daughter's prayer!

GOVERNOR. Your father's oath!

TILBURINA. My lover!

GOVERNOR. My country!

TILBURINA. Tilburina!

GOVERNOR. England!

TILBURINA. A title!

GOVERNOR. Honor!

TILBURINA. A pension!

GOVERNOR. Conscience!

TILBURINA. A thousand pounds!

GOVERNOR. Hah! thou hast touched me nearly!

PUFF. There, you see—she threw in "Tilburina." Quick, parry cart with "England"!—Hah! thrust in tierce a "title"!—parried by "honor." Hah! "a pension" over the arm!—put by by "conscience." Then flanconade with "a thousand pounds"—and a palpable hit, egad!

TILBURINA. Canst thou—
Reject the *suppliant*, and the *daughter* too?
GOVERNOR. No more; I would not hear thee plead in vain:
The *father* softens—but the *governor*
Is fixed! *Exit* [Governor]

DANGLE. Aye, that antithesis of persons is a most established figure.

TILBURINA. 'Tis well,—hence then, fond hopes, —fond passion, hence;
Duty, behold I am all over thine—
WHISKERANDOS. (*Without*) Where is my love —my—
TILBURINA. Ha!
WHISKERANDOS. (*Entering*) My beauteous enemy—

PUFF. Oh, dear, ma'am, you must start a great deal more than that! Consider, you had just determined in favor of duty—when, in a moment, the sound of his voice revives your passion—overthrows your resolution—destroys your obedience. If you don't express all that in your start, you do nothing at all.

TILBURINA. Well, we'll try again!

DANGLE. Speaking from within has always a fine effect.

SNEER. Very.

WHISKERANDOS. My conquering Tilburina! How! is't thus
We meet? why are thy looks averse? what means
That falling tear—that frown of boding woe?
Hah! now indeed I am a prisoner!
Yes, now I feel the galling weight of these
Disgraceful chains—which, cruel Tilburina!
Thy doting captive gloried in before.—
But thou art false, and Whiskerandos is undone!
TILBURINA. Oh, no! how little dost thou know thy Tilburina!
WHISKERANDOS. Art thou then true?—Begone cares, doubts, and fears!
I make you all a present to the winds;
And if the winds reject you—try the waves.

PUFF. The wind, you know, is the established receiver of all stolen sighs and cast-off griefs and apprehensions.

TILBURINA. Yet we must part!—stern Duty seals our doom:
Though here I call yon conscious clouds to witness,
Could I pursue the bias of my soul,
All friends, all right of parents, I'd disclaim,
And thou, my Whiskerandos, shouldst be father
And mother, brother, cousin, uncle, aunt,
And friend to me!
WHISKERANDOS. Oh, matchless excellence!—and must we part?
Well, if—we must—we must; and in that case,
The less is said the better.

PUFF. Hey day! here's a cut!—What, are all the mutual protestations out?

TILBURINA. Now, pray, sir, don't interrupt us just here; you ruin our feelings.

PUFF. *Your* feelings!—but zounds, *my* feelings, ma'am!

SNEER. No; pray, don't interrupt them.

WHISKERANDOS. One last embrace.—
TILBURINA. Now,—farewell, forever.
WHISKERANDOS. Forever!
TILBURINA. Aye, forever. (*Going*)

PUFF. 'Sdeath and fury!—Gad's life!—sir! madam! if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out—Here, here!

CONFIDANTE. But pray, sir, how am *I* to get off here?

PUFF. *You*, pshaw! what the devil signifies how *you* get off! edge away at the top,[1] or where you will—(*Pushes the* Confidante *off*) Now, ma'am, you see—

TILBURINA. We understand you, sir.

Aye, forever.
BOTH. Oh—h! *Turning back, and exeunt*

(*Scene closes*)

DANGLE. Oh, charming!

PUFF. Hey!—'tis pretty well, I believe: you see I don't attempt to strike out anything new—but I take it I improve on the established modes.

SNEER. You do, indeed. But, pray, is not Queen Elizabeth to appear?

PUFF. No, not once; but she is to be talked of forever, so that, egad, you'll think

[1] back stage.

a hundred times that she is on the point of coming in.

SNEER. Hang it, I think it's a pity to keep *her* in the green-room all the night.

PUFF. Oh, no, that always has a fine effect—it keeps up expectation.

DANGLE. But are we not to have a battle?

PUFF. Yes, yes, you will have a battle at last; but, egad, it's not to be by land, but by sea—and that is the only quite new thing in the piece.

DANGLE. What, Drake at the Armada, hey?

PUFF. Yes, i'faith—fire-ships and all; then we shall end with the procession. Hey! that will do, I think!

SNEER. No doubt on't.

PUFF. Come, we must not lose time; so now for the under plot.

SNEER. What the plague, have you another plot?

PUFF. O Lord, yes; ever while you live have two plots to your tragedy. The grand point in managing them is only to let your under plot have as little connection with your main plot as possible.—I flatter myself nothing can be more distinct than mine; for as in my chief plot the characters are all great people, I have laid my under plot in low life; and as the former is to end in deep distress, I make the other end as happy as a farce.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

Enter Under Prompter

UNDER PROMPTER. Sir, the carpenter says it is impossible you can go to the park scene yet.

PUFF. The park scene! No—I mean the description scene here, in the wood.

UNDER PROMPTER. Sir, the performers have cut it out.

PUFF. Cut it out!

UNDER PROMPTER. Yes, sir.

PUFF. What! the whole account of Queen Elizabeth?

UNDER PROMPTER. Yes, sir.

PUFF. And the description of her horse and side-saddle?

UNDER PROMPTER. Yes, sir.

PUFF. So, sir!—this is very fine, indeed.—Mr. Hopkins, how the plague could you suffer this?

HOPKINS. (*From within*) Sir, indeed the pruning-knife—

PUFF. The pruning-knife—zounds!—the axe! Why, here has been such lopping and topping, I sha'n't have the bare trunk of my play left presently.—Very well, sir—the performers must do as they please; but, upon my soul, I'll print it every word.

SNEER. That I would, indeed.

PUFF. Very well, sir; then we must go on. —Zounds! I would not have parted with the description of the horse!—Well, sir, go on. —Sir, it was one of the finest and most labored things.—Very well, sir; let them go on—there you had him and his accoutrements from the bit to the crupper.—Very well, sir; we must go to the park scene.

UNDER PROMPTER. Sir, there is the point: the carpenters say that unless there is some business put in here before the drop, they sha'n't have time to clear away the fort or sink Gravesend and the river.

PUFF. So! this is a pretty dilemma, truly!—Gentlemen, you must excuse me—these fellows will never be ready unless I go and look after them myself.

SNEER. Oh, dear, sir, these little things will happen.

PUFF. To cut out this scene!—but I'll print it—egad, I'll print it every word!

Exeunt

ACT III

SCENE I. *Before the curtain*

Enter PUFF, SNEER, *and* DANGLE

PUFF. Well, we are ready;—now then for the justices.

Curtain rises—Justices, Constables, *etc. discovered*

SNEER. This, I suppose, is a sort of senate scene.

PUFF. To be sure; there has not been one yet.

DANGLE. It is the under plot, isn't it?

PUFF. Yes.—What, gentlemen, do you mean to go at once to the discovery scene?

JUSTICE. If you please, sir.

PUFF. Oh, very well.—Harkee, I don't choose to say anything more—but, i'faith, they have mangled my play in a most shocking manner.

DANGLE. It's a great pity!

PUFF. Now, then, Mr. Justice, if you please.

JUSTICE. Are all the volunteers without?
CONSTABLE. They are.
Some ten in fetters, and some twenty drunk.
JUSTICE. Attends the youth whose most opprobrious fame
And clear, convicted crimes have stamped him soldier?
CONSTABLE. He waits your pleasure; eager to repay
The blest reprieve that sends him to the fields
Of glory, there to raise his branded hand
In honor's cause.
JUSTICE. 'Tis well—'tis justice arms him!
O! may he now defend his country's laws
With half the spirit he has broke them all!
If 'tis your worship's pleasure, bid him enter.
CONSTABLE. I fly, the herald of your will.

Exit Constable

PUFF. Quick, sir!

SNEER. But, Mr. Puff, I think not only the Justice but the clown seems to talk in as high a style as the first hero among them.

PUFF. Heaven forbid they should not, in a free country!—Sir, I am not for making slavish distinctions and giving all the fine language to the upper sort of people.

DANGLE. That's very noble in you, indeed.

Enter Justice's Lady

PUFF. Now, pray, mark this scene.

LADY. Forgive this interruption, good my love;
But as I just now passed a pris'ner youth,
Whom rude hands hither lead, strange bodings seized
My fluttering heart, and to myself I said,
And if our *Tom* had lived, he'd surely been
This stripling's height!

JUSTICE. Ha! sure some powerful sympathy directs
Us both—

Enter Son *and* Constable

What is thy name?
SON. My name's *Tom Jenkins—alias* have I none—
Though orphaned, and without a friend!
JUSTICE. Thy parents?
SON. My father dwelt in Rochester—and was,
As I have heard—a fishmonger—no more.

PUFF. What, sir, do you leave out the account of your birth, parentage, and education?
SON. They have settled it so, sir, here.
PUFF. Oh! oh!

LADY. How loudly Nature whispers to my heart!
Had he no other name?
SON. I've seen a bill
Of his signed *Tomkins,* creditor.
JUSTICE. This does indeed confirm each circumstance
The gipsy told!—Prepare!
SON. I do.
JUSTICE. No orphan, nor without a friend art thou—
I am thy father; *here's* thy mother; *there*
Thy uncle—this is thy first cousin, and those
Are all your near relations!
MOTHER. Oh, ecstasy of bliss!
SON. Oh, most unlooked for happiness!
JUSTICE. Oh, wonderful event!
(*They faint alternately in each other's arms*)

PUFF. There, you see relationship, like murder, will out.

JUSTICE. Now let's revive—else were this joy too much!
But come—and we'll unfold the rest within;
And thou, my boy, must needs want rest and food.
Hence may each orphan hope, as chance directs,
To find a father—where he least expects!

Exeunt

PUFF. What do you think of that?

DANGLE. One of the finest discovery scenes I ever saw.—Why, this under plot would have made a tragedy itself.

SNEER. Aye, or a comedy either.

PUFF. And keeps quite clear, you see, of the other.

Enter Scenemen, *taking away the seats*

PUFF. The scene remains, does it?

SCENEMAN. Yes, sir.

PUFF. You are to leave one chair, you know.—But it is always awkward, in a tragedy, to have you fellows coming in in your playhouse liveries to remove things—I wish that could be managed better.—So now for my mysterious yeoman.

Enter a Beefeater[1]

BEEFEATER. Perdition catch my soul, but *I* do love thee.

SNEER. Haven't I heard that line before?

PUFF. No, I fancy not—Where, pray?

DANGLE. Yes, I think there is something like it in *Othello*.[2]

PUFF. Gad! now you put me in mind on't, I believe there is—but that's of no consequence; all that can be said is, that two people happened to hit on the same thought—and Shakespeare made use of it first, that's all.

SNEER. Very true.

PUFF. Now, sir, your soliloquy—but speak more to the pit, if you please; the soliloquy always to the pit—that's a rule.

BEEFEATER. Tho' hopeless love finds comfort in despair,
It never can endure a rival's bliss!
But soft—I am observed. *Exit* Beefeater

DANGLE. That's a very short soliloquy.

PUFF. Yes—but it would have been a great deal longer if he had not been observed.

SNEER. A most sentimental Beefeater that, Mr. Puff.

PUFF. Harkee—I would not have you be too sure that he *is* a Beefeater.

SNEER. What, a hero in disguise?

PUFF. No matter—I only give you a hint.—But now for my principal character.—Here he comes—*Lord Burleigh* in person! Pray, gentlemen, step this way—softly; I only hope the Lord High Treasurer is perfect—if he is but perfect!

Enter BURLEIGH; *goes slowly to a chair, and sits*

SNEER. Mr. Puff!

PUFF. Hush! vastly well, sir! vastly well! a most interesting gravity!

DANGLE. What, isn't he to speak at all?

PUFF. Egad, I thought you'd ask me that—yes, it is a very likely thing—that a minister in his situation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, should have time to talk!—but hush! or you'll put him out.

SNEER. Put him out! how the plague can that be, if he's not going to say anything?

PUFF. There's a reason! why, his part is to *think*; and how the plague do you imagine he can *think* if you keep talking?

DANGLE. That's very true, upon my word!

BURLEIGH *comes forward, shakes his head, and exit*

SNEER. He is very perfect, indeed.—Now, pray, what did he mean by that?

PUFF. You don't take it?

SNEER. No, I don't, upon my soul.

PUFF. Why, by that shake of the head he gave you to understand, that even tho' they had more justice in their cause and wisdom in their measures—yet, if there was not a greater spirit shown on the part of the people, the country would at last fall a sacrifice to the hostile ambition of the Spanish monarchy.

SNEER. The devil!—did he mean all that by shaking his head?

PUFF. Every word of it—if he shook his head as I taught him.

DANGLE. Ah! there certainly is a vast deal to be done on the stage by dumb show and expression of face; and a judicious author knows how much he may trust to it.

SNEER. Oh, here are some of our old acquaintance.

Enter HATTON *and* RALEIGH

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. *My* niece, and *your* niece too!

[1] A yeoman of the guard.

[2] III, iii, 90.

By Heav'n, there's witchcraft in't; he could not else
Have gained their hearts.—But see, where they approach—
Some horrid purpose low'ring on their brows!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. Let us withdraw and mark them. (*They withdraw*)

SNEER. What is all this?

PUFF. Ah! here has been more pruning!—but the fact is, these two young ladies are also in love with Don Whiskerandos.—Now, gentlemen, this scene goes entirely for what we call *situation* and *stage effect*, by which the greatest applause may be obtained without the assistance of language, sentiment, or character. Pray, mark!

Enter the Two Nieces

1ST NIECE. Ellena here!
She is his scorn as much as I—that is
Some comfort still!

PUFF. Oh, dear, madam, you are not to say that to her face!—*aside*, ma'am, *aside*.—The whole scene is to be *aside*.

1ST NIECE. (*Aside*) She is his scorn as much as I—that is
Some comfort still!

2D NIECE. (*Aside*) I know he prizes not Pollina's love;
But Tilburina lords it o'er his heart.

1ST NIECE. (*Aside*) But see, the proud destroyer of my peace.
Revenge is all the good I've left.

2D NIECE. (*Aside*) He comes, the false disturber of my quiet.
Now, vengeance, do thy worst.—

Enter WHISKERANDOS

[WHISKERANDOS.] Oh, hateful liberty—if thus in vain
I seek my Tilburina!

BOTH NIECES. And ever shalt!

(SIR CHRISTOPHER *and* SIR WALTER *come forward*)

[BOTH UNCLES.] Hold! we will avenge you.

WHISKERANDOS. Hold *you*—or see your nieces bleed!

(*The two* Nieces *draw their two daggers to strike* WHISKERANDOS; *the two* Uncles *at the instant, with their two swords drawn, catch their two* Nieces' *arms and turn the points of their swords to* WHISKERANDOS, *who immediately draws two daggers and holds them to the two* Nieces' *bosoms*)

PUFF. There's situation for you! there's an heroic group!—You see the ladies can't stab Whiskerandos—he durst not strike them for fear of their uncles—the uncles durst not kill him because of their nieces—I have them all at a deadlock!—for every one of them is afraid to let go first.

SNEER. Why, then, they must stand there forever.

PUFF. So they would if I hadn't a very fine contrivance for't.—Now mind—

Enter BEEFEATER, *with his halberd*[1]

BEEFEATER. In the Queen's name I charge you all to drop
Your swords and daggers!
(*They drop their swords and daggers*)

SNEER. That is a contrivance, indeed!

PUFF. Aye—in the Queen's name.

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON. Come, niece!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. Come, niece!

Exeunt with the two Nieces

WHISKERANDOS. What's he who bids us thus renounce our guard?

BEEFEATER. Thou must do more—renounce thy love!

WHISKERANDOS. Thou liest—base Beefeater!

BEEFEATER. Ha! hell! the lie!
By Heav'n, thou'st roused the lion in my heart!
Off, yeoman's habit!—base disguise! off! off!
(*Discovers himself by throwing off his upper dress and appearing in a very fine waistcoat*)
Am I a Beefeater now?
Or beams my crest as terrible as when
In Biscay's Bay I took thy captive sloop?

PUFF. There, egad! he comes out to be captain of the privateer who had taken Whiskerandos prisoner—and was himself an old lover of Tilburina's.

DANGLE. Admirably managed, indeed.

PUFF. Now, stand out of their way.

[1] A combined battle-axe and pike.

WHISKERANDOS. I thank thee, Fortune! that hast thus bestowed
A weapon to chastise this insolent.
(*Takes up one of the swords*)
BEEFEATER. I take thy challenge, Spaniard, and I thank thee,
Fortune, too!—
(*Takes up the other sword*)

DANGLE. That's excellently contrived!—it seems as if the two uncles had left their swords on purpose for them.

PUFF. No, egad, they could not help leaving them.

WHISKERANDOS. Vengeance and Tilburina!
BEEFEATER. Exactly so—
(*They fight—and after the usual number of wounds given,* WHISKERANDOS *falls*)
WHISKERANDOS. Oh, cursed parry!—that last thrust in tierce
Was fatal—Captain, thou hast fenced well!
And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene
For all eter—
BEEFEATER. —nity—he would have added, but stern Death
Cut short his being and the noun at once!

PUFF. Oh, my dear sir, you are too slow: now mind me.—Sir, shall I trouble you to die again?

WHISKERANDOS. And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene
For all eter—
BEEFEATER. —nity—he would have added—

PUFF. No, sir—that's not it—once more, if you please.

WHISKERANDOS. I wish, sir, you would practise this without me—I can't stay dying here all night.

PUFF. Very well; we'll go over it by and by.—I must humor these gentlemen!
Exit WHISKERANDOS

BEEFEATER. Farewell, brave Spaniard! and when next—

PUFF. Dear sir, you needn't speak that speech, as the body has walked off.

BEEFEATER. That's true, sir—then I'll join the fleet.

PUFF. If you please. *Exit* BEEFEATER
Now who comes on?

Enter Governor, *with his hair properly disordered*

GOVERNOR. A hemisphere of evil planets reign!
And every planet sheds contagious phrensy!
My Spanish prisoner is slain! my daughter,
Meeting the dead corse borne along, has gone
Distract!
(*A loud flourish of trumpets*)
But hark! I am summoned to the fort—
Perhaps the fleets have met! amazing crisis!
O Tilburina! from thy aged father's beard
Thou'st plucked the few brown hairs which time had left! *Exit* Governor

SNEER. Poor gentleman!
PUFF. Yes—and no one to blame but his daughter!
DANGLE. And the planets—
PUFF. True.—Now enter Tilburina!
SNEER. Egad, the business comes on quick here.
PUFF. Yes, sir—now she comes in stark mad in white satin.
SNEER. Why in white satin?
PUFF. O Lord, sir—when a heroine goes mad, she always goes into white satin—don't she, Dangle?
DANGLE. Always; it's a rule.
PUFF. Yes—here it is—(*Looking at the book*) "Enter Tilburina stark mad in white satin, and her confidante stark mad in white linen."

Enter TILBURINA *and* Confidante, *mad, according to custom*

SNEER. But what the deuce! is the confidante to be mad too?
PUFF. To be sure she is; the confidante is always to do whatever her mistress does—weep when she weeps, smile when she smiles, go mad when she goes mad.—Now, madam confidante—but keep your madness in the background, if you please.

TILBURINA. The wind whistles—the moon rises—see,

They have killed my squirrel in his cage!
Is this a grasshopper?—Ha! no; it is my
Whiskerandos—you shall not keep him—
I know you have him in your pocket—
An oyster may be crossed in love!—Who says
A whale's a bird?—Ha! did you call, my love?
—He's here! He's there!—He's everywhere!
Ah me! He's nowhere! *Exit* TILBURINA

PUFF. There, do you ever desire to see anybody madder than that?

SNEER. Never, while I live!

PUFF. You observed how she mangled the metre?

DANGLE. Yes—egad, it was the first thing made me suspect she was out of her senses.

SNEER. And pray, what becomes of her?

PUFF. She is gone to throw herself into the sea, to be sure—and that brings us at once to the scene of action, and so to my catastrophe—my sea fight, I mean.

SNEER. What, you bring that in at last?

PUFF. Yes, yes—you know my play is *called* the *Spanish Armada*; otherwise, egad, I have no occasion for the battle at all.—Now then for my magnificence!—my battle!—my noise!—and my procession!—You are all ready?

PROMPTER. (*Within*) Yes, sir.

PUFF. Is the Thames dressed?

Enter THAMES, *with two* Attendants

THAMES. Here I am, sir.

PUFF. Very well indeed.—See, gentlemen, there's a river for you!—This is blending a little of the masque with my tragedy—a new fancy, you know—and very useful in my case; for as there *must be a procession*, I suppose Thames and all his tributary rivers to compliment Britannia with a fête in honor of the victory.

SNEER. But, pray, who are these gentlemen in green with him?

PUFF. Those?—those are his banks.

SNEER. His banks?

PUFF. Yes, one crowned with alders, and the other with a villa!—you take the allusions?—But hey! what the plague! you have got both your banks on one side—Here, sir, come round—Ever while you live, Thames, go between your banks. (*Bell rings*) There, soh! now for't.—Stand aside, my dear friends!—away, Thames!

Exit THAMES *between his banks*

(*Flourish of drums, trumpets, cannon, etc. etc. Scene changes to the sea—the fleets engage—the music plays "Britons strike home."—Spanish fleet destroyed by fireships, etc.—English fleet advances—music plays "Rule, Britannia."—The procession of all the English rivers, and their tributaries, with their emblems, etc. begins with Händel's water music; ends with a chorus, to the march in "Judas Maccabæus."—During this scene* PUFF *directs and applauds everything—then*)

PUFF. Well, pretty well—but not quite perfect; so, ladies and gentlemen, if you please, we'll rehearse this piece again tomorrow.

CURTAIN DROPS

NOTES

THE REHEARSAL

The Rehearsal was written as a satire on contemporary theatrical extravagances, particularly upon those of heroic drama. It also attacks certain personal enemies of the Duke of Buckingham. The first intent was to ridicule D'Avenant and the Howards. *The United Kingdoms*, a heroic play by Colonel Henry Howard, had been produced in 1663 amid the riotous interruptions of the Duke's followers, but many alterations were needed before the initial production of *The Rehearsal* at the Theatre Royal on December 7, 1671. Thomas Sprat, Martin Clifford, and probably the poets Waller and Cowley, aided Buckingham; there is also good contemporary evidence for adding Samuel Butler to the list of collaborators. Naturally the number of authors and the long period of composition made *The Rehearsal* a general satire of literary importance. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* influenced the structural form of the play, and Buckingham's stage satire in turn afforded Sheridan material for *The Critic*, by far the most famous of the three.

Seventeen plays have been named as being burlesqued in *The Rehearsal*. Six of these are by Dryden, *The Conquest of Granada* and *Marriage à la Mode* being most clearly parodied. In 1671 the former of these two had just been produced very successfully and the latter was well known in manuscript form. In the original version Buckingham's play was ready for the stage early in the summer of 1665, but on June 5 all London theatres had been closed by the Lord Chamberlain for the duration of the plague. When the playhouses were reopened, this form was inept; moreover the death of D'Avenant made the satire upon *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) merely of historical interest. Meanwhile the growth of Dryden's reputation was giving new material for satiric parody of a still more extravagant sort of heroic drama. Though the central figure of Bayes possesses some marks of the original characterization of Sir Robert Howard and D'Avenant, in most respects it is a satirical representation of Dryden. No one else so fully embodied the dramatic extravagances of the age, and the personal ridicule in no way hindered the use of passages directed against the writings of other dramatists.

If the positive merits of heroic drama are to be found best in Dryden's *Aureng-Zebe*, its defects as seen in *The Conquest of Granada* are made very much more prominent through the lines of *The Rehearsal*. Tedious love-and-honor debates, melodramatic war settings, and the abrupt, unmotivated shifts of action made too great demand upon the patience of an audience. Elaborate similes and wordy arguments delayed the action intolerably at times, and in the final scenes all plausibility was frequently lost through a servile obedience to the rule of poetic justice. Under its laws the neo-classic rules were made of more importance than the commonest traits of human nature. In this pressure of critical standards upon original taste Restoration drama of the serious sort lost completely the profound, sententious characterization of the greatest Elizabethans.

The Rehearsal was first printed in 1672, by Thomas Dring. Mr. Summers has found a total of thirty-two editions, of which the next in importance is dated 1675. This revised version, "with amendments and long additions by the author," contains still more intensive satire upon Dryden. Of almost equal historical importance is the *Key*, printed with Samuel Briscoe's edition of 1704. It is the most valuable commentary upon Buckingham's allusions and parodies. A second key is preserved in the British Museum as a part of Bishop Percy's incomplete edition of all the writings of Buckingham. Both sources of information were used by Edward Arber when preparing his replica of the first edition of *The Rehearsal*. This was published in 1868, and until recently has been the most useful form of the play obtainable. Excellent critical editions have recently been published by Professor George R. Noyes with his "Selected Dramas of John Dryden" (1910) and by Mr. Montague Summers (1916).[1]

[1] Data will be acknowledged in the notes by initials of these editors and by K for the *Key*.

PAGE 3, LINE 27 **John Lacy:** the actor who played the part of Bayes.

4 81 **thy last play.** Dryden's *Conquest of Granada.* In the following speeches the allusions may be to *Marriage à la Mode*, first acted in May, 1672, but shown by the Preface to have been passed about in manuscript. Compare especially the subplot with the Prince Prettyman episodes of the present play. (N.)

5 125 **the rule of transversion.** A satire on Dryden's use of the same material in both prose and verse.

5 146 **table-book:** a pocket notebook with "tablets" for memoranda.

6 218 **Amaryllis.** The *Key* states: "The part of Amaryllis was acted by Mrs. Anne Reeves, who, at that time, was kept by Mr. Bayes." The rôle was undoubtedly an impersonation. Many contemporary satires on the same topic still exist. Modern readers of this quotation may need a reminder that in the period covered by these plays the abbreviation "Mrs." was equivalent to the present-day "Miss" for an unmarried woman, and also to "Mrs.," our distinguishing term for a married woman. The text of the plays in this volume contains many examples of the peculiarity.

7 323 **I have printed.** Dryden thus announced *The Indian Emperor* as a sequel of *The Indian Queen.* (K.)

7 363 **certain ties upon me.** In 1668 Dryden agreed, according to Malone, to write three plays yearly for the King's Company, in return for a share and a quarter. He never fulfilled the contract.

8 400 Cf. *Conquest of Granada*, Part II, I, ii, 128 ff.:

> So two kind turtles, when a storm is nigh,
> Look up and see it gathering in the sky;
> Each calls his mate to shelter in the groves,
> Leaving, in murmurs, their unfinished loves;
> Perched on some drooping branch, they sit alone,
> And coo and hearken to each other's moan. (K.)

8 414 Cf. Stapylton's *The Slighted Maid*, III, for original of this "song in dialogue." (K.)

8 452 **Mr. Ivory.** Abraham Ivory had once acted women's rôles, but through drinking heavily had come to be merely a messenger about the theatre. (K.)

8 6 **I begin . . . with a whisper.** As in Mrs. Behn's *Amorous Prince* (1671), and in many other plays. See Summers's edition.

9 101 **Mr. Wintershall:** an old actor who had appeared in many minor rôles with Killigrew's company.

10 63 **the Nursery.** In 1664 Charles II granted a patent for the erection of a theatre for training young actors who were later to be taken into the king's or the duke's company. The house stood in Golding Lane near the Barbican.

11 22 Cf. *Conquest of Granada*, Part I, V, iii, 129 ff.:

> As some fair tulip, by a storm oppressed,
> Shrinks up and folds its silken arms to rest;
> And, bending to the blast, all pale and dead,
> Hears from within the wind sing round its head;
> So shrouded up your beauty disappears:
> Unveil, my love, and lay aside your fears. (K.)

12 49 **Enter Shirley:** a popular actor, evidently brought on here without being cast for any part except his dance at the end.

12 32 **I have broke my nose.** Sir William D'Avenant was often satirized because of his extremely snub nose.

13 34 Failer and Bibber, his tailor, in *The Wild Gallant*, have a similar dialogue. (K.)

14 78 **an angel for the king's evil.** Having been touched by the king as a cure for scrofula, the patient had a gold angel hung about his neck. It was not coined after 1634, but a token was thereafter used in the ceremony. In 1627 an angel was worth ten shillings.

15 65 Cf. *Marriage à la Mode*, I, 328–342. (N.)

16 180 **Knightsbridge:** across the Tyburn from old London.

17 185 **Enter Prince Volscius.** Following is a close parody of *The English Monsieur* (IV, ii), by the Honorable James Howard. Pepys saw the play on December 8, 1666.

17 250 **a combat.** Cf. *An Essay of Heroic Plays*: ". . . an heroic play ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and consequently . . . Love and Valor ought to be the subject of it. Both these Sir William D'Avenant had begun to shadow." Dryden referred to *Love and Honour* (4to, 1649).

18 4 **to begin with a funeral.** Howard's *The United Kingdoms* was so written. (K.)

18 31 **the rule of romance.** The speech shows understanding of Dryden's sources. It also ridicules the practice of writing plays in two parts.

19 112 **Drawcansir:** a burlesque of Almanzor in the *Conquest of Granada.*

20 181 Cf. *Tyrannic Love*, III:

> I'll come all soul and spirit to your love, etc. (K.)

21 248 **Lo, from this conquering lance.** The following is a parody of a scene in *The Villain*

(1663), a tragedy by Thomas Porter. There the host furnishes a collation out of his clothes. (K.)

21 255 Cf. *Conquest of Granada*, Part II, IV, iii, 158–159:

> He who dares love, and for that love must die,
> And, knowing this, dares yet love on, am I. (K.)

22 298 **Roman clothes.** Reminiscent of an extravagant revival of Jonson's *Catiline* in December, 1668. (S.)

22 19 **reasoning in verse:** one of Dryden's evident tendencies.

23 7 **Harry the Eight.** In December, 1663, *Henry VIII* was revived at the Duke's Theatre with elaborate accessories. Its stage vogue evidently continued, but no quartos seem to have been issued.

23 10 **The Curtain is drawn up.** Evidently Bayes and the gentlemen were on the apron. At the end of Act IV the curtain had been dropped, contrary to custom, in order to give opportunity for this setting.

23 36 **what sound is this invades our ears:** a heroic-play metaphor.

24 52 Cf. *Tyrannic Love*, IV, iii:

> Hark, my Damilcar, we are called below, etc. (K.)

26 203 **I sum up my whole battle.** In *The Siege of Rhodes* seven characters "sum up" a battle to recitative music. (K.) The description of the fight satirizes Dryden's manner.

26 245 **the Chelsea cuirassiers.** This phrase parodies the use of foreign proper names.

27 304 ***The Slighted Maid*** (1663): a comedy by Sir Robert Stapylton. The *Key* indicates a long passage from Act V as source of the following masque.

27 328 **sell the earth a bargain:** a trick of answering innocent questions with vulgarity.

28 416 **gone to dinner.** As dinner was at twelve, *The Rehearsal* was supposedly in the morning. Plays were usually begun about three o'clock, though the hour gradually became later. Pepys refers to leaving the playhouse as late as midnight, but in his day performances ordinarily began at five o'clock or earlier.

29 452 **Haynes and Shirley.** Both were dancers belonging to Killigrew's company. Haynes was much used for prologues and epilogues; both played minor rôles regularly. (S.)

THE MAN OF MODE, OR SIR FOPLING FLUTTER

The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter was first acted at the Duke's Theatre in the year 1676. Although its stage history has been creditable, the play has more importance through its share in the development of modern high comedy.

The title character has the foppish mannerisms of Molière's Mascarille, particularly as that figure appears in *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. Wycherley had presented a similar character in *The Gentleman Dancing Master*, as had a half dozen other English dramatists in as many plays, but Etherege's Sir Fopling Flutter made the stage fop an accepted character on the London stage. Other evident borrowings from Molière are the themes of urban satire upon country life, the device of delaying the entry of a leading character in order to arouse expectation, and the use of familiar native characters and settings.

In spite of its continental origin the play is not merely imitative. The scenes are from fashionable London life of the period, and the central group of characters shows men and women of Etherege's own circle. Tradition has it that Dorimant is a portrayal of Lord Rochester; Medley, of Sir Charles Sedley; and Sir Fopling Flutter, of "Beau" Hewitt. Spence believed Dorimant to be a sketch of Etherege himself. Though these assertions may have little fact behind them, they imply that the rôles were conceived in the atmosphere of contemporary London court life. Even the country figures, stock subjects of stage satire, have more reality than in later comedies of this school. The other characters of the play—chairmen, tradesmen, and venders—have unusual value in the finished representations of St. James Street and Pall Mall.

Firm plot structure is not looked for in plays of this type, and *The Man of Mode* is no better in that respect than its kind. It shares with them all a uniformity of animation in its dialogue and heartlessness in its intrigues. Etherege was active at a time when such qualities became standard in seventeenth-century comedy and with Wycherley represents the early achievements in a new form.

30 Dedication. The friendship of Mary of Modena, the young Duchess of York, amply repaid Etherege for this tribute. As queen of James II she was able to assist the dramatist in his appeal for official employment.

30 Sir Car Scroope: versifier and man about town. He was often involved in the satirical contests of wit at the court of Charles II. His song is a translation of a French elegy. (*Biog. Brit.*)

31 15 **Nature . . . and wit.** The seventeenth-century literature of England is marked by many comments on this old theme of the respective merits of natural genius and art.

32 47 **Totnam** (or Tottenham): a northern suburb of Old London, now a shopping center in the north-central district.

32 78 **Change:** the trading center of London. The place is often confused with the financial district, called the "Exchange."

34 277 **a fit o' the mother.** A very old expression, in which "mother" is synonymous with "hysteria."

36 442 **Bethlem** (or Bethlehem): a hospital for the insane, in Bishopsgate.

38 648 **Long's or Locket's:** two famous London coffeehouses, one of them in the Haymarket, the other near Charing Cross.

40 105 **Go! You're a rogue.** Other passages show the next two sentences to be addressed to Emilia, not to Young Bellair.

40 126 **ombre:** a card game for three persons, played without the eights, nines, or tens. The game of gleek was also for three players.

41 215 **the Bear Garden.** Bear baiting was a popular amusement of London as late as 1747. Hockley Hole was the scene of these spectacles.

42 81 **St. Winifred's.** The sanative power still credited to St. Winifred's spring at Holywell, Flint, had its origin in a legend. The spring was a popular shrine for pilgrims.

46 68 **haughty Merab.** Saul promised Merab to David as reward for his valor, but then gave her to Adriel (*1 Sam.*, xviii). The allusion is inept here unless there be some contemporary addition.

47 110 **an eye like Bart'lomew.** A reference to the rolling eyes of puppets in the many shows exhibited at the annual Bartholomew Fair, in Smithfield. Established in 1120, this fair was held yearly until 1855 with the exception of lapses on account of the plague, as in 1665–1666. From 1691 to 1694 the fair lasted fourteen days, but three was the usual term.

47 112 **keep your gingerbread.** Originally a "fairing" was any present brought home; usually, however, it was an image of the saint. Gingerbread figures were at length substituted for other types.

47 166 **Exchange women.** Such as frequented the "Old," or Royal, Exchange.

48 217 **th' Circle:** the fashionable drive in Hyde Park.

48 15 **Muddiman.** Henry Muddiman was the most favored journalist of the seventeenth century. He began as a Parliamentary journalist in 1659, then under Charles II had such special favors as free post with all correspondents and almost a monopoly of state news. He was interested in giving news-letter service to country readers but also promoted for the government the *London Gazette*, started in 1665 as the official journal and now the oldest active English publication.

49 121 **the Mall.** Pall Mall, still the name of the promenade in St. James Park, was so called from the game of mall, which was played on the grassy alley with balls and mallets. Charles II was the one to change the open meadow into a formal driveway and promenade.

51 261 ***calèche*** (now "calash"): a light carriage with low wheels.

51 265 **Inns of Court man:** a resident in one of four groups of buildings (the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn, or Gray's Inn) belonging to the legal societies having exclusive right to admit to bar practice. The last two were named after family estates once lying west of the city.

52 353 **stums:** originally signifies to give wine an artificial fermentation by means of admixture or repression.

54 145 **high Mall:** the most fashionable hour for promenading.

61 294 ***coq-à-l'âne*** (Fr., "a cock on an ass"): a silly, disconnected account. Compare our "cock-and-bull story."

61 319 **Bussy.** Historically, Bussy d'Ambois (1549–1579) was an active agent in the St. Bartholomew and following religious troubles, on the Catholic side. See Dumas's *Dame de Montsereau*, and Chapman's plays *Bussy d'Ambois* (1604; printed, 1607) and *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois* (1613).

61 323 **Rabutin** (1618–1693): French gentleman-at-arms, author of a *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules* (1665), a satire on current scandals at the French court that led to the composition of many such fictitious memoirs in both France and England.

62 414 **basque:** the short skirt of a doublet, extending slightly below the waist.

62 436 **a mumming:** acting in disguise, usually with strolling players, as for a Christmas entertainment.

66 141 **Duke of Candale** (1627–1658): grandson to Henry IV of France. He had high place

in the army and was considered the most gallant man of his time.

66 144 **brandenburg.** A morning gown, named after the Prussian center of woolen manufacturing.

66 173 **a *ruelle*** (Fr., "bedside"). French ladies of this period held levees in their bedchambers, and the practice was imitated in England; there the word "ruelle" gained the meaning of the space between the bed and the wall, or, as here, of the chamber itself.

71 357 ***mirabilis:*** a strong drink made from spirit of wine and various spices. Dryden says that fashionable ladies of the time carried it about with them.

74 139 **a suit of hangings:** wall draperies, used before the introduction of wall-paper.

75 245 **the canonical hour:** stated hours of devotion, or, as here, the hours within which marriage may be performed legally. English law still requires that in any parish church marriage ceremonies be held between the hours of eight in the morning and three in the afternoon.

AURENG-ZEBE

In his Preface (1672) to *The Conquest of Granada* Dryden formulated his rules of heroic drama. This defense was undoubtedly due to the staging of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* during the previous year, and it is noteworthy that circumstances drew from Dryden no hint of change in dramatic methods. He still held that heroic verse was necessary for serious plays; that, according to the tradition of heroic poetry, love and honor must be their theme; and that the tumult of war, though not actually presented, gave proper atmosphere for such presentations. An all-conquering hero, strangely susceptible to outside forces, gives the pattern of all the major characters, who combine either a sensual or an idealistic passion with an almost uniformly hopeless love of others in the group. Mutual love is rare, and finer shades of human feeling are ignored in an atmosphere surcharged with elemental desire; extravagance is assumed to be grandeur and nobility. On such grounds the plot of heroic drama was considered melodramatic and fully deserving of burlesque.

Good and bad, Dryden drew these elements from Renaissance tradition, as he found it formulated by the French writers, in combination with elements from French and English practice. He considered this blend the original of a dramatic type that was to hold "art" and "nature" in perfect proportions. This development of a new structure went on until his great success with *The Conquest of Granada*, and produced his "rules" of heroic drama; thereafter Dryden gradually relinquished his bombastic, artificial characteristics and tempered his style through a study of Racine, Boileau, and later French critics. Ridicule at home also had a share in his change of manner. The shift is definitely marked in *Aureng-Zebe* (staged in 1675); here the heroic-drama devices do not invite satire. By the year 1677, in *All for Love*, Dryden had subdued his early manner to a point where he could give English drama its finest embodiment of French classical drama.

Dryden's *Aureng-Zebe* is a historical play, owing its popularity to the great interest of the seventeenth century in East Indian trade. His story follows closely François Bernier's *Histoire de la dernière révolution des États du Grand Mogol*, on sale in translation in February, 1671. Bernier had been an eyewitness of many events in the civil wars terminating in 1659 with the complete supremacy of Aureng-Zebe. This prince was the third of four sons of Sháh-Jáhán ("king of the world"), of the line of Temur-Leng (Tamerlane). After the manner of Lear, the old king divided his kingdom when old age and disease made him unfit for war, and anticipation of his death brought on civil warfare. Aureng-Zebe used Morad, the youngest, against the eldest son, Darah. He then imprisoned the old king at Agra, arrested Morad when in a drunken stupor, and drove Sultan Shuja into exile. Darah, finally captured, was led in disgrace through the streets of Delhi and then beheaded.

Using these facts essentially as given by Bernier, Dryden changed several proper names and added a useful love story. He ignored two intriguing sisters who give zest to the original narrative, but utilized fully Bernier's exact characterizations of the four brothers. Some close paraphrasing of Seneca's *Hippolytus* (IV, i, 130–160) has been discovered, and the style of dialogue owes something to the Roman tragedian; it is an open question whether the dialogue and the traits of the central figure of all heroic drama may not be indebted to Elizabethan use of Seneca, but in this play the indebtedness is direct. Langbaine's parallels on the central figure, taken from *Samson Agonistes*, seem pointless in face of the direct evidence. A better parallelism has been drawn between the plots of *Aureng-*

Zebe and Racine's *Mithridate*; this is made more sure through Dryden's known reliance upon French criticism after 1672. Apart from the studied handling of materials, Dryden had in Bernier's story a series of incidents well suited to the formal scheme of heroic drama. This fact undoubtedly had a share in his decision to attempt again a tragedy whose characters should be "the nearest to those of an heroic poem."

80 ***Sed, cum:*** but when he has brought down the house with his lines, he must starve unless he sell his virgin *Agave* [an unacted pantomime] to Paris [an actor] (Juvenal, *Satires,* VII, 86, 87).

80 **Dramatis Personæ.** The first Quarto shows that the first four parts were taken by Messrs. Mohun, Hart, Kynaston, and Wintershull. The four women having the chief rôles in order were Mesdames Marshall, Coxe, Corbett, and Uphill.

80 **Dedication.** The Earl of Mulgrave (1648–1721) is best known for his acrimonious criticism of contemporaries, particularly for his part in aiding Dryden in satire upon a former patron, the Earl of Rochester. Active in military service, he held court favor under three sovereigns.

81 ***Si fractus*** . . .: should the shattered universe o'erwhelm him, the ruins will strike him untrembling (Horace, *Odes,* III, iii, 7).

81 ***Ille meos*** . . .: he who first joined me to himself has all my love; let him keep it with him and guard it in his tomb (*Æneid*, IV, 28, 29). Veronica da Gambera had these lines engraved on the door of her chamber after the death of her husband.

82 **one of your noble ancestors.** Probably a reference to Colonel Charles Fairfax, grandson of the first Earl of Mulgrave. He fell at Marston Moor.

82 ***Suave*** . . .: it is sweet, when on the great sea the winds trouble the waters, to behold from shore the great distress of another—not because it is pleasure or joy that anyone should be distressed, but because it is sweet to perceive from what ills you yourself are free (*De Rerum Natura,* II, 1–4).

82 ***Omnis enim*** . . .: for the whole nature of gods must in itself of necessity enjoy immortality together with the greatest repose (*De Rerum Natura,* II, 644, 645); [Nature] exempt from care and fear (II, 19) . . . strong in her own resources (II, 650).

82 ***Despicere*** . . .: whence you may look down on others and see them wandering all about and going astray in their search for the path of life (*De Rerum Natura,* II, 9, 10).

83 **Mandana:** mother of Cyrus by Cambyses.

83 ***Cyrus:*** *Le Grand Cyrus*, a long French romance, written by Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701).

83 ***Homo sum*** . . .: I am a man; I count nothing human foreign to me (Terence, *Heauton*, I, i, 25). In the *Spectator*, No. 502, Steele translated it thus: "I am a man, and cannot help feeling any sorrow that can arrive at man." This stress upon feeling instead of upon the true sense of curiosity, or interest, was the basis of sentimental comedy in its interpretations of moral principles.

83 ***Tales sunt*** . . .: the minds of men are according to the light that Father Jupiter himself has shed on the earth with his fertilizing torch (Cicero, *de fato*, from *Odyssey*, XVIII, 136, 137).

84 ***Nos in diem*** . . .: we live for the day; whatsoever strikes our minds as a probability, that we utter (Cicero, *Tusc.*, V, 33).

84 ***Summa*** . . .: the sum total of my excuse is this: I shall satisfy you if you will permit me to remedy the fault (Petronius, *Satires*, Cap. 130, 6).

84 ***De ipsis*** . . .: now as regards my subject, I often fear, Brutus, that I shall meet with censure for writing upon this topic to you, who are yourself so great an adept in philosophy and in the highest branch of philosophy [Dryden uses "poetry"]. Did I assume the attitude of an instructor, such censure would be deserved; but nothing could be further from me. I dedicate my work to you, not to teach you what you know extremely well already, but because your name gives me a very comforting sense of support and because I find in you a most impartial judge and critic of the studies which I share with you.

97 335 **Candahar:** a province of southern Afghanistan.

98 399 **Balasor:** now a district of Orissa, British India.

103 187 **second causes:** physical demonstrations of God.

114 363 **Semele.** Having been promised by Zeus that she should have whatever she desired, Semele asked to behold him in all his splendor. She was destroyed by his lightnings; hence her name, "the thunder-smitten."

ALL FOR LOVE

Dryden asserted that the sources of *All for Love* were to be found in Shakespeare, Dio Cassius, Appian, and Plutarch. This learned pretense is not borne out by the text. The account of Plutarch appears in the description of Cleopatra's death, and in a few other details available in Shakespeare; but the other two ancient writers had no influence upon Dryden. *Antony and Cleopatra,* however, was clearly the source of Act V, for some twenty-five passages[1] throughout the play, and for the groundwork of Act III, 161–182. The last passage challenges comparison with *Antony and Cleopatra*, II, ii, 196–223.

In Dryden's estimation the Renaissance doctrine of the Aristotelian unities and the traditional "rules" of tragedy were more important than materials. Facts were to be altered to suit the demands of structure; consequently he felt free to treat Shakespeare's narrative as he chose. Everything occurring before the fatal day Dryden makes known through expository speeches, and all the events chosen for Antony's birthday happen in one place. Thus were the constantly shifting scenes covering ten years of time in the older play abridged to the swift action of a single day following the battle of Actium. In order to meet the rule of unity of action Dryden reduced his dramatis personæ to a few noble characters concerned in a single, well-unified plot tending to "deter mankind from the pursuit of vice." The principles of decorum and poetic justice clearly required that these characters be simple in motive and without personal traits that would interfere with the traditional methods of plot development. They also have certain traits inherited from heroic drama not found in tradition.

The action of *All for Love* is frequently slow, at times falling away entirely before rhetorical debate. Act I has this fault; yet it deserves the praise given it by Dryden, for the speeches show admirably the constant change of feeling in the two characters. Near the end of Act II Cleopatra has lines that show uncommon understanding of human nature. This play upon the human feelings of pride, jealousy, and selfishness gives vigor to a plot which at the outset seems exhausted. The subjective study of character compensates for a lack of action seemingly common to all of Dryden's plays, and in poetic beauty the play is above his other work.

[1] See the parallel passages as printed in *The Bankside Restoration Shakespeare* (1908) and in Professor Strunk's edition of the play in the *Belles Lettres* series.

130 ***Facile est*** . . .: it is easy to note some "glowing" expression (as I may call it) and to laugh at it when the fires of passion are cold (Cicero, *Orator*, VIII, 27). Dryden omitted *enim* and *iam* from the original text.

130 Earl of Danby. Sir Thomas Osborne (1631–1712) was then the chief minister of Charles II.

130 ***Carmen amat*** . . .: he loves a song, whoever accomplishes things worthy of a song (Claudian, XXIII, 6). (N.)

132 ***Felices nimium*** . . .: oh, Englishmen, too fortunate did they but know their blessings (altered from Vergil's *Georgics*, II, 458–459).

132 changed his party. Applicable to the Earl of Shaftesbury, then a leader of the Whig dissenters.

132 your father: Sir Edward Osborne, an ardent royalist under Charles II.

132 the Earl of Lindsey (1582–1642). Died in the royalist cause at Edgehill.

134 ***Nous ne sommes*** . . .: naught are we but ceremony. Ceremony sweeps us away and we let go the substance of things. We cling to the branches and abandon the trunk and body. We have taught ladies to blush at only hearing that named which they fear not at all to do; we dare not call our members by their right names, and fear not to use them for every sort of debauchery. Ceremony forbids us to express in words lawful and natural things, and we are guided by it; reason warns us to do nothing unlawful or bad, and no one is guided by it (*Essais*, II, xvii: *De la présomption*).

135 ***Rarus enim*** . . .: for in that condition common sense is usually rare (Juvenal, *Satires*, VIII, 73–74).

135 Horace was . . . right. This idea is offered in *Satires*, I, i, 1–3.

135 in the greater majesty. Scott thought this directed at Rochester, then on bad terms with Dryden.

135 him who had thirty legions. The philosopher Favorinus justified himself for disputing but weakly with the Emperor Hadrian, with the remark, "Why, would you have me contend with him who commands thirty legions?" (Strunk)

135 persecutors . . . of Horace. Throughout the passage the allusions are to Rochester's satire on Dryden, entitled *Allusion to the Tenth Satire of Horace.*

136 Crispinus. Jonson in *The Poetaster* also has the idea that Crispinus, the Stoic poet, was the bore encountered by Horace on the Via Sacra (cf. *Satires*, I, i, 120, and ix). (Strunk)

136 ***Demetri . . .:*** Demetrius, and you, Tigellius, I bid whine among the chairs of your pupils (Horace, *Satires*, I, x, 90–91).

136 ***Saxum antiquum . . .:*** an ancient rock, huge, . . . placed as the boundary of a field, that it might keep strife away from the fields (*Æneid*, XII, 897–898).

136 ***Genua labant . . .:*** their knees give way; their blood congeals with cold. Then the rock itself, that of the hero, whirled through empty space, neither flew the whole distance nor struck the mark (*Æneid*, XII, 905–907). Dryden predicts that his critics will fail as did Turnus in his assault upon Æneas.

136 Sternhold. Thomas Sternhold (1500–1549), a mediocre poet who, with John Hopkins, wrote the metrical version of the Psalms printed in the Church of England hymn books during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Dryden's friend Tate was a collaborator in the version that displaced the old form before 1700.

136 ***Vellem . . .:*** I could wish that in friendship we might thus err, and that on this error good sense had bestowed an honorable name (*Satires*, I, iii, 41–42).

136 ***Canibus . . .:*** sluggish dogs, hairless, with long-standing mange, and licking the mouth of a dry lamp, shall have the name leopard, tiger, lion—or whatever there is on earth that rages still more violently (*Satires*, VIII, 34–37). This is a retort to Rochester's slurs on Shadwell and Wycherley.

136 ***Nigra . . .:*** the black is "honey-dark"; the foul and rank, "without love of order"; . . . she is tongue-tied and cannot speak, "she has a lisp"; the dumb one is "modest" (*De Rerum Natura*, IV, 1160, 1164).

136 ***ad Ethiopem cygnum:*** to calling an Ethiopian "swan." From the well-known words *vocamus Ethiopem cygnum* (Juvenal, *Satires*, VIII, 32–33).

136 Mr. Rymer. Thomas Rymer (1641–1713) in 1678 published his *Tragedies of the Last Age Considered*, an unfavorable estimate of English drama according to strict classical tradition.

136 ***Vos exemplaria . . .:*** turn over your Greek models by night, by day (*Ars Poetica*, 268–269).

138 25 **the boy-king:** Cleopatra's brother.

140 161 **fate.** The context seems to show this to be used in the usual sense, not, as Furness surmised, in the sense of "fête" with an old spelling.

144 381 **that thou wert my equal.** One of many places where Dryden follows the rules of decorum.

144 409 **immortal, and a pattern.** This is an allusion to the Platonic idea of divine patterns after which created things were made.

144 442 **To Cassius's camp.** In the first onset at Philippi Antony defeated Cassius, who thereupon killed himself.

147 111 **Has he courage?** The following lines have been held to be a slur upon Louis XIV for physical cowardice. The king of France began his wars for European supremacy in 1672 and thus gave the dramatists of England a reason for satiric allusion.

148 226 **washed an Ethiope.** One of many evidences of a wide reading of Æsop's Fables at the end of the seventeenth century.

152 13 **Phlegræan plains.** In Macedonia, the fabled scene of the struggle between the gods and the Titans.

153 41 **my father Hercules.** Plutarch derived the Antonii from Anton, son of Hercules.

155 161 **she came from Egypt.** Compare the following passage with *Antony and Cleopatra*, II, ii, 196–223.

162 106 **Gallus.** Cornelius Gallus (d. 26 B.C.) is known from Vergil's *Eclogues*, X, to have written verses in praise of his Lycoris (Cytheris). Delia was the theme of Tibullus's love poems.

166 349 **Meroe:** a district of northeastern Africa.

179 15 ff. See page 14, lines 121–133, for what may be the cause of Dryden's assertion that he would not write merely to please his public.

VENICE PRESERVED

The play of *Venice Preserved; or, A Plot Discovered* was first produced at Dorset Garden in February, 1682. Copies of the Prologue bearing the date 1681 are extant in broadside form. Otway's source was Abbé Saint-Réal's historical romance, *Conjuration des Espagnols contre la république de Venise en 1618*, which had been translated into English in 1675. In the original story, Spain, through her ambassador, had united in a complicated conspiracy all the foes of Venice, already war-ridden, so that the city republic was

on the verge of ruin. French, Neapolitan, and Spanish conspirators were ready to spring their trap when a certain Jaffeir was led through a revolt of conscience to reveal all to the Council of Ten. His fellow conspirators were ruthlessly murdered, in spite of promised immunity, and Jaffeir was drowned while returning home after a brief military service in Spain.

This story admirably suited Otway's need for satire against those involved in the "Popish Plot" of 1678. In that year Titus Oates, a discredited churchman, had professed knowledge of a plot to murder Charles II and to reëstablish Catholicism in England, presumably under the Duke of York, legal successor to the throne. Anthony Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, had unscrupulously used this chance to urge the Whigs and Dissenters into open rebellion, with himself as the chief adviser to their intended ruler, the illegitimate Duke of Monmouth. By 1682 his stratagems had failed, but the Earl was still powerful. Otway was therefore pleasing the court Tories by the frank personal references to Shaftesbury in the Prologue and Epilogue and in the character of Antonio.

The artistic side of a play written in imitation of Shakespeare is more significant than the contemporary allusions. Otway's most significant creative work appears in the character of Belvidera, who forms the natural center of a well-devised tragic action in which personal feeling is of first importance. The love story is wholly his own work. Belvidera and Jaffeir are genuinely human characters, in spite of sentimental faults, as is resolute Pierre, who in some ways resembles Dryden's Ventidius. It is true that the situations are frequently much like those of heroic drama and that the subplot[1] clearly shows the moral laxity of the age; yet in general effect the play is Elizabethan. The tolling bell, the ghosts, the use of madness, bloodshed on the stage, and sex motivation are devices from the schools of Fletcher and Ford. In many lines the dialogue echoes Shakespeare, and the minor characters seem to be direct borrowings from his Roman plays.

Theatrical records show an unbroken vogue for *Venice Preserved* until the end of the eighteenth century. On the continent its popularity led to a French adaptation, *Manlius Capitolinus* (1698), by Antoine de la Fosse, and to translations into German, French, Italian, and Russian. No other English tragedy has so nearly rivaled the plays of Shakespeare both at home and abroad.

[1]Not included in the performance after 1730; in that year it was included at the request of George II.

180 the Duchess of Portsmouth: Louise de Kéroualle, an agent of Louis XIV, mother of the "young prince" referred to below. Her son by Charles II had little influence at court, but the Duchess ruled the king from 1670 until his death.

181 Prologue. The allusions are to revolutionary disturbances in England following the "Popish Plot" of 1678. Sir Edmund Godfrey (ll. 17–20), a London magistrate involved in the proceedings, was mysteriously murdered, his body being found five days after his disappearance.

181 1 distracted. The broadside copy of the Prologue reads "unsettled."

181 33 Mother Creswold: a notorious London procuress.

181 34 Poland, Poland! Shaftesbury had schemed to become king of Poland.

182 32 The Adriatic wedded. On Ascension Day the Doge of Venice annually performed the ceremony of casting a ring into the Adriatic as a mark of "true and lasting dominion."

187 335 Oh, woman! . . . These lines in praise of womankind have the spirit of earlier English tragedy.

198 60 O Portia. The historic story of Marcus Junius Brutus and his wife is best known as told in *Julius Cæsar*.

200 162 alley-lurking villains. In December, 1679, Dryden was assaulted, presumably by order of the Earl of Rochester, who suspected the poet of having written the bold *Essay on Satire*. See the Epilogue for direct reference to the incident, which occurred in Rose Alley, Covent Garden.

217 193 my aversion: a common stage expression of the time. See *The Plain Dealer* for examples of its use.

224 24 the picture-mangler. The act of vandalism described here was a mark of hostility toward the Duke of York, legitimate successor to the throne, because of his professed Catholicism. See line 37 for a reference to the "exile" of the Duke, who was then in Scotland.

BURY FAIR

Thomas Shadwell's comedy *Bury Fair* was first staged at Drury Lane early in 1689. It shows the characteristics of its author, who was a late follower of the realistic Ben Jonson; *Bartholomew Fair* evidently gave Shadwell his no-

tion of writing such a play, and many of the characters are of the "humor" type. Two of the persons, Oldwit and Sir Humphrey, are native Englishmen somewhat like earlier creations in the Duke of Newcastle's *The Triumphant Widow* (1677), and in Aphra Behn's *False Count* (1682) there is a Frenchman very similar to Shadwell's; these points of likeness to earlier plays are insignificant, for *Bury Fair* is actually a compound of English and French realistic comedy. Both Jonson and Molière are easily distinguishable.

Shadwell's specific indebtedness to Molière is for character material from *Les Précieuses Ridicules*; his general debt is for urbanity of manner and fine choice of comic situation. These noteworthy assimilations into the ruder strain of Jonson's realism must be counted to Shadwell's credit. The extent of his imitation cannot cover up the usefulness of this union.

Mistress Fantast mangles French words after the style of several Elizabethan stage characters; this touch is common in Restoration plays. The original work in *Bury Fair* is to be found in the fine series of contemporary pictures in the groups at the fair and at Oldwit's house, in the dialogue dealing with class differences, and in the moralizing speeches on woman. Herein are valuable records of seventeenth-century thought and feeling. In such work Shadwell surpassed other dramatists of his generation because devotion to the principles of Jonson led him into distinctive channels of thought. His plays are critical commentaries on his environment. As a critic, however, he could not rival his master, in spite of many labored prefaces and learned allusions. *Bury Fair* ridicules the love and honor plots of heroic drama, but without Jonson's acumen in such matters or any original method of analysis. As for its political opinions, they have the perfunctory quality natural to a confirmed partisan.

Shadwell's contribution to English drama may be summed up in the statement that he made the practice and criticism of playwriting a serious business. Like Jonson before him, he went in for a painstaking study of principles and considered human nature generically as the source of comic materials. It cannot be added that he too founded a school. Nevertheless a perusal of *The Squire of Alsatia* and *Bury Fair* ought to create in one a wholesome respect for their carefully developed situations and well-defined types of seventeenth-century men and women.

225 Dramatis Personæ. The First Quarto gives as actors of the first eight characters Messrs. Betterton, Mountfort, Underhill, Noakes, Bowman, Leigh, Bohen, Miss Butler. The three chief women parts were played by Mesdames Cory, Boutell, and Mountfort.

225 The Epistle. Noteworthy only for its pure Whig partisanship. The Earl of Dorset had advanced Shadwell's interests by getting him appointed to the places of Poet Laureate and Historiographer Royal, at a salary of three hundred pounds a year.

231 387 **Ben Jonson's son:** term applied to younger men writing under Jonson's influence even after his death. The dramatists Randolph (l. 401), Field, and Marmion were among them, as were the poets Herrick, Cleveland (l. 400), and Suckling.

231 388 **the Apollo:** Ben Jonson's room in the Devil's Tavern. This structure remained standing in Fleet Street until 1787.

231 400 **Jack Cleaveland.** John Cleaveland, or Cleveland (1613–1658), a royalist, was prominent at Cambridge, being author of one of the Latin elegies in memory of Edward King, published with Milton's *Lycidas*. He was highly praised for his political poems and greatly influenced Samuel Butler.

231 401 **Tom Randolph.** Thomas Randolph (1605–1635) came but slightly under the influence of Jonson. During his few years of work he produced successful plays combining the humor element of his master with a unique sort of exuberant satire based on a good understanding of classical literature.

231 430 The translation is inaccurate as well as silly.

236 24 **Mrs. Gatty.** The modern equivalent would be "Miss Gertie."

238 234 **the drunken slaves.** Spartan parents made them object lessons for the young.

239 253 The reference is to Juvenal, *Satires*, VI, 440.

239 260 **Jack Fletcher:** John Fletcher (1579–1625), who collaborated with Francis Beaumont and Philip Massinger and was the leading writer of romantic drama after the death of Shakespeare.

239 269 **Taylor:** Joseph Taylor, who was the leading tragedian of the Lord Chamberlain's Company after the death of Richard Burbage in 1619.

240 26 **atlases:** Indian satins.

243 270 ***Whego*** . . . . Badly pronounced Spanish for "play of hands, play of villains." The meaning is that practical jokes belong only to the vulgar.

244 380 **Luxemburg . . . Monts:** names connected with the war of the League of Augsburg against Louis XIV. The allied armies began action in 1688 and the war continued for ten years, ending with the final surrender of French claims upon the Netherlands.

247 22 **the Thetford music.** This had been popular at the court of Charles II. The town of Thetford is thirty miles northeast of Cambridge.

248 110 **Lilly Burlero.** The refrain of a song mocking the Irish Catholics that was popular in 1688.

249 2 **the monteith:** a basin having notches in the rim whereby drinking glasses might be held suspended in cool water.

253 286 ***Beati* . . .:** the happy count not the hours.

255 497 ***Res est* . . .:** love is a thing that's full of cares and fears (Ovid, *Heroides*, I, 12).

255 504 **Scudery.** Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701), author of French romances, actually published some of her work under the name of her brother.

255 514 **Balzac,** Jean Louis Guez de: a French writer (1594–1654) famous for his letters and volumes of social philosophy.

256 588 ***Quelle* . . . .** The phrase is given thus in the first edition. The bad French of Mistress Fantast is perhaps due in part to an English compositor.

266 35 **our late restoration.** Implies that mistresses ruled the court of the Stuarts.

267 124 ff. Compare Andrew Marvell's amusing poem "To His Coy Mistress" (Manly's *English Poetry*, p. 199).

267 201 **Breakè de gold:** a customary sign of betrothal in former times.

270 419 ***Hi sunt* . . .:** these are the triumphs of peace; wars will bring others.

274 Epilogue. Scans the circumstances leading to the crowning of William III and his immediate struggle to establish himself against the combined power of James and Louis XIV.

LOVE FOR LOVE

Love for Love had the distinction of being the first play produced at Betterton's new Lincoln's Inn Fields following the revolt against Rich's rule at Drury Lane. The cast was excellent and the play itself admirably fitted for a well-rounded company. The source of the main story was Molière's *L'Avare*, which Congreve used in a clear, well-motivated action surpassing his other plays in point of structure. The farcical ending of the Frail-Tattle story is pardonable, for with it the dramatist added other minor figures—Jeremy, Prue, and young Ben, for example—which give *Love for Love* stronger appeal than is possible in pure high comedy. It would be idle to discuss the wit of Mistress Frail and her disingenuous sister, or the masterly drawing of Valentine and his mad wisdom. These are matter for appreciation, not analysis. Perhaps nothing so impresses one on second reading as the skill of Congreve in using many striking characters with constant shifting from one situation to another without becoming obscure or tiresome. All the characters belong to the play and every one appears in the situations suited to his disposition.

276 ***Nudus agris* . . .:** stripped of his estates and paternal treasures, [insane] he prepares to go mad by fixed reason and rule (Horace, *Satires*, II, iii, 184, 271).

276 Dramatis Personæ. The First Quarto shows the parts to have been played in order by these actors and actresses: men, Messrs. Underhill, Betterton, Smith, Bowman, Doggett, Sanford, Bowen, Trifussis, and Freeman; women, Mesdames Bracegirdle, Bowman, Barry, Ayliff, Leigh, and Lawson.

276 Charles, Earl of Dorset (1638–1706). Made Earl in 1677. He was a courtier and wit at William's court, but was notorious for excesses. His patronage of literature extended over many years, Dryden, Butler, and Wycherley all coming under his favor. He himself composed verses.

277 Nec minus . . .: I shall consider what his ears can endure no less than what is due his virtues.

277 the new play-house. Betterton's new Lincoln's Inn Fields opened with this play, the actors having rebelled against Rich's unfair treatment at the old house.

277 a woman. The speaker for whom the lines were written was Anne Bracegirdle (*c.* 1674–1748). She made her first success in Otway's *Orphan*, but did not reach her real leadership on the London stage until her rôle of Araminta in *The Old Bachelor*. Her part in *Love for Love* was most highly praised, though she acted in plays by Rowe and Shakespeare also with great success. She finally left the stage through envy of Anne Oldfield, and at Congreve's death received a legacy sufficient for her needs.

278 Prologue. This was given to Mr. Thomas Betterton (*c.* 1635–1710), who was on the stage

constantly during these years. His greatest rôles were in the adapted versions of Shakespeare, but he played in all the tragedies of importance presented at Lincoln's Inn Fields. It was in the second house on that site that he became, in 1695, an acting manager.

279 99 **crambo.** Played by adding a rhyming line to one set by another person.

280 111 **Will's Coffee-house.** Named after the proprietor, William Urwin. It stood in Covent Garden, outside the old city.

282 334 **the Poultry:** a short street connecting Cheapside and Cornhill; it was once a central fowl market.

286 667 **like other bad painters.** May be a slur on Sir Peter Lely (d. 1680), painter to Charles II, or on some other artist. In 1695 Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723) was in favor.

286 715 **conjunction:** the astronomical term for the appearance of two planets within the same sign, but Congreve constantly uses the term with a double meaning.

286 725 **Artemidorus** (fl. 170 A.D.): author of *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

289 146 **Look to't, nurse.** Angelica's speech contains an accusation of witchcraft.

290 214 **Ptolemy,** Claudius (fl. 175 A.D.): an Egyptian astronomer and geographer. His theory that the sun and planets revolved about the earth was accepted universally before the work of Copernicus.

290 216 **Nostrodamus:** Michel de Nostradamus (1503–1566), a French astrologer and physician, author of a book of mystical prophecies called *Centuries*.

291 254 **sapiens.** The spirit of Sir Sampson's speech indicates that this line has here its earlier meaning of "The wise man shall rule the stars," not that common in popular usage.

291 274 **Cham** (obsolete form of "khan," from "chagan" = lord): the title given rulers of the Tartars or Mongols; it also was used of the emperor of China.

291 276 **Bantam:** presumably the northwest coast of Java.

291 283 **a conjurer . . . circle.** Magicians made circles, within which to call down spirits.

291 294 **Mandeville:** the reputed author of a fourteenth-century book of travels full of fabulous stories.

291 295 **Pinto:** a sixteenth-century Portuguese traveler in China and Japan.

291 303 **Albumazar:** an Arabian astronomer living in the ninth century. The English play of that name, acted first at Cambridge in 1614, gave a meaning of "quack astronomer" to the word.

291 308 **Haly:** probably refers not to Edmund Halley (1656–1742), the famous English astronomer, but to the Arabian physician Haly, who died in 994.

292 385 **benefit o' the clergy.** In medieval times the phrase meant the right of appeal to be tried before an ecclesiastical court as a way to avoid the death penalty. In the time of William III the meaning in England was that all persons able to read should be absolved from the penalties attached to certain crimes. Such is clearly the meaning here.

294 550 **Knightsbridge . . .:** fashionable but questionable resorts. On Spring Garden see the *Spectator*, No. 383, and Miss Burney's *Evelina*.

294 561 **World's End:** a tavern in Knightsbridge.

303 549 **St. Dunstan's clock:** in Fleet street. It had two wooden giants to toll the hours.

303 561 **the French fleet.** In the spring of 1689 James began civil war against William III, and in May France took up his cause. Louis XIV did not acknowledge the sovereignty of William until the Peace of Ryswick, 1697.

303 577 **Raymond Lully** (1235?–1315): Spanish philosopher and supposed alchemist.

303 578 **Lilly,** William (1602–1681): an English astrologer and an author of almanacs.

304 618 **Pineda.**[1] **Juan de Pineda** was a Spanish theologian.

311 303 **act St. Dunstan.** This saint was supposed to have caught the devil by the nose with a pair of pincers as his reply to temptation.

311 310 ***in forma pauperis:*** a form of plea whereby a man having less than five pounds might avoid paying costs.

311 339 ***Erra Pater:*** used as a nickname for an astrologer in Butler's *Hudibras*, in allusion to Lilly.

312 10 **Cardan:** Girolamo Cardano (1501–1576), an Italian physician and astrologer.

314 203 **Cuckold's-point:** down the Thames below Rotherhithe Church, on the Surrey bank. It was marked by a pair of horns aloft on a pole.

315 299 **Taliacotius,** Gasparo (1546–1599): a Venetian surgeon.

315 304 **pigeons.** Hot bricks and a halved pigeon were so used in desperate illness. (S.)

1 From *De rebus Salomonis Regis*, III. (Summers)

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

Congreve's *The Way of the World* is known, by reason of its brilliant conversation and striking situation, as the full expression of the high comedy having its origin in imitation of Molière. More than any other play of the time it shows a just union of polished style and colloquial freedom in scenes of unvarying grace.

Weakness of plot proves Congreve to have been interested chiefly in characterization, dialogue, and individual situation. Only in one device—that of keeping Millamant off the stage—can Molière's *Misanthrope* be shown as a source, and this means to suspense was well known through earlier imitation. The play is a composite of materials fully assimilated and refashioned before the dramatic skill of Congreve took its final form. From the established traditions of high comedy grew farcical possibilities relieving the dramatist of any regard for plot unity; yet even so Congreve cannot be pardoned such obscurity that the first task confronting a reader is to analyze the story in a search for motives.

Much may be done, by discarding the characters not directly concerned, to make the thread of the action stand out more clearly. Witwoud and Petulant serve as butts for the wit of Mirabell and Fainall, and themselves in turn make sport of the Shropshireman Sir Wilfull. Several other minor characters have little more to do with the main intrigue, namely, Mirabell's trick of sending a false suitor to Lady Wishfort in order to divert her anger from himself and so make possible his suit for Millamant. The protagonist throughout is a legacy of six thousand pounds, which the old aunt may keep in case Millamant ignores her wishes. Act II slowly opens up the subplot of the love-intriguers, Fainall and Mistress Marwood; they hope to see Millamant disowned in order that the funds may descend duly to Fainall's wife and so fall to them for their mutual pleasure. Naturally they know nothing of Mirabell's weak trick for distracting Lady Wishfort's attention, or of his precaution against disaster through seeing that the pretended suitor is first safely married to a serving-woman. When Mistress Marwood later picks up these details, she becomes the force opposing the plan of Mirabell.

After her entry, in the most brilliant scene of the comedy, Millamant becomes the center of activity. The situations are brilliant, full of wit at the expense of Sir Wilfull, yet they advance the story very little. In Act IV Lady Wishfort fails to marry Millamant to Sir Wilfull, and after a momentary pleasure in her pretended suitor is somewhat enlightened through Mistress Marwood's letter. The last act shows her shifting to strange mother-love for her deceived daughter, Mrs. Fainall, and seeking a means to save the family name. Fainall seizes this chance to press an arrogant demand for disobedient Millamant's legacy, on the plea that only so will he keep his "disgraced" wife. But Millamant suddenly professes readiness to marry Sir Wilfull; the legacy is in the balance, and Lady Wishfort stands completely mazed. The climax comes with Mrs. Fainall's revelation that all her rights in the estate have long been pledged to Mirabell—the residue of an old intrigue that has been hinted at earlier in the play. At last Mirabell has the situation in his own control. He wins Millamant and her legacy by relinquishing his claim in a manner that saves Lady Wishfort's family name. Fainall is driven to servile obedience, Mistress Marwood is disgraced, and Lady Wishfort drops her hope of marriage with the consolation that she has come off scot-free.

These incidents form the framework of a comedy of manners that depicts the foibles of a small group by means of the usual elements of gossip, well-bred immorality, and flashing wit. Such hard, conscienceless wit is not a part of high comedy, but rather a latent defect of the type that Congreve failed to avoid. His characters are too nearly alike in motive to be well distinguished, and their uniform brilliance of speech only adds to their unnatural similarity. This defect is easily explained by recalling the true aim of high comedy as Congreve conceived it; he endeavored to portray a social group by means of rapidly shifting scenes in which plot and characterization were to be subordinated to display. The oft-discussed moral values of *The Way of the World* cannot be justified so easily. From the first scene Congreve's characters confess their narrow interest in life, and the title enforces their expressions from first to last; hence to demand from them moral precept or example is to ask for a violation of standards. Modern taste is offended by the innuendoes and by a conclusion utterly lacking in poetic justice, but to make this test the beginning and end of Congreve criticism is to ignore completely the elaborate trifling and sheer brilliance that in English drama are much rarer than logical plot and competent characterization.

329 *Audire est* . . .: it is worth your while, ye that do not wish well to adulterers, to hear how they are hampered on all sides (Horace, *Satires*, I, ii, 37–38).

329 *metuat* . . .: the woman fears for her dowry if she should be caught (Horace, *Satires*, I, ii, 131).

329 Dramatis Personæ. The First Quarto shows the parts to have been played in order by the following persons: men, Messrs. Betterton, Verbruggen, Bowen, Bowman, Underhill, and Bright; women, Mesdames Leigh, Bracegirdle, Barry, Bowman, Willis, and Prince.

329 Dedication. Ralph, Earl of Montagu (*c.*1638–1709), held state appointments under the last Stuarts and also under William III. He was among the most pleasure-loving and unscrupulous of the court party, with no special interest in literature.

339 58 **Penthesilea.** Aided the Trojans against the Greeks until killed by Achilles.

347 83 **Quarles and Prynne.** Francis Quarles (1592–1644) wrote sacred poems that were in favor for a hundred years after his death. William Prynne (1600–1669) was a pamphleteer during the Commonwealth, but is remembered chiefly for his *Histriomastix*, a violent attack upon the stage during the time of Charles I. Both references are cynical.

347 84 *The Short View of the Stage* (1698): Jeremy Collier's famous attack, Congreve being one of the chief sufferers under the charge of immoral playwriting.

348 167 **Long-lane.** Ran from West Smithfield to the Barbican, and was filled with the sheds of dealers in old clothes.

354 692 **Furnival's Inn:** once an inn of chancery, forming a part of Lincoln's Inn.

354 695 **Dawks's Letter:** a news sheet issued first in 1696. Half the page was filled with current news, in script print, and the blank part was to be used for a personal message.

355 799 **a citizen's child.** This is a court slur upon the Whig population of the city.

355 819 **a cap of maintenance:** a sign of office, to be carried in procession before one in authority.

357 62 **There never yet was woman made. . . .** This and the other lines are from the poems of Suckling and Waller.

360 320 **atlases:** Indian satins.

365 Act V follows the incidents named in Scene I, lines 88–95.

368 251 **babies:** dolls.

368 297 **'prentices at a conventicle.** Servants were sent by masters indisposed to attendance to take notes on sermons.

369 356 **a Muscovite husband.** Esteemed the height of barbarity. In 1697 England had seen Russians in real life when Peter the Great came to study modern modes of industry.

371 511 **be o' the quorum:** to be a justice whose attendance was essential for the forming of a bench.

372 639 **Messalina's poems.** Apparently the fictitious ascription was made only to bring in the name of Claudius's incontinent wife, though there may be reference to "a clandestinely printed collection of loose verses" (Summers, *Notes and Queries*, May 22, 1920).

THE BEAUX STRATAGEM

The Beaux Stratagem is important historically and for its own peculiar merits as a comedy of manners. The frank brutality of Wycherley and the bland, unscrupulous intriguing of Vanbrugh are here revived in a milder fashion that displays many arts and graces from Congreve. The play is a blend of many strains, even of Elizabethan, and it has many single lines reminiscent of well-known Restoration plays. Its chief historical importance, however, lies in the clear change from Restoration standards of art and civility. The plot is simple and yet sinewy, never falling into mere situation, and with an ending of a fairly wholesome sort. All the characters are worth knowing, possessing other charms than simply mental acuteness and deftness of phrase; they are first-drafts from reality. Also, in the change of scene from London to a provincial setting, where the city characters are not supreme, Farquhar altered the stock satire upon country life. He likewise made important contribution to the materials of English comedy by choosing characters of common birth without apology for violating the scrupulous practices of the preceding generation. In all this he reflects the taste of a more democratic public having a higher moral sense but less highly cultivated minds than their forebears. Farquhar more successfully than Cibber or Steele conformed to the new standards without losing entirely the old spirit. *The Beaux Stratagem* is in this respect his most successful piece.

It is said that actors then playing favored Farquhar's plays because the speeches could be memorized so easily. Surely his characters speak

informally and spontaneously. The dialogues of Archer and Cherry and the scenes where Bonniface holds the stage show this characteristic freedom of expression, one of the qualities distinguishing Farquhar's characters from others of the time. Scrub and his master, Bonniface the inn-keeper, and the servants are made as important individually as their betters, and only rarely are their lines out of character; in fact Scrub is the only person of the play who seems at times unnaturally apt. The highwayman became a stock figure; on the stage of Gay he rose to importance and was often presented in fiction between 1710 and 1750. Foigard is similarly the forerunner of a long line of characters. Enough is said of the individuality of all these figures when mention is made of their reappearances in prose and drama. Gay, Fielding, Goldsmith, and Sheridan were the chief writers to utilize these "low" characters that once more brought vigor into English comedy.

375 Advertisement. See the Biographical Note, p. 915.

375 Dramatis Personæ. The First Quarto gives the following names of players, omitting those of the men playing Hounslow and Bagshot: men, Messrs. Mills, Wilks, Bowman, Verbruggen, Keen, Bowen, Cibber, Bullock, and Norris; women, Mesdames Powell, Bradshaw, Oldfield, Mills, and Bignal.

375 8 **Union.** The union of England and Scotland took effect on May 1, 1707.

377 140 **the French officers:** doubtless prisoners from the successful campaigns of Marlborough in leading the Grand Alliance against the forces of Louis XIV, in the trade war begun against France and Spain in 1702. Ramillies was the great battle of 1706.

381 8 **Doctors-Commons:** near St. Paul's. It was the scene of ecclesiastical trials until the middle of the nineteenth century. See *David Copperfield*. The court had jurisdiction over marriage and divorce.

386 195 **catechise.** This catechism was printed separately in 1707 as "Love's Catechism compiled by the Author of the Recruiting Officer for the use and benefit of all young bachelors, maids, and widows that are inclinable to change their condition."

388 79 **a Jesuit.** A Jesuit would have been under suspicion as secretly aiding plans for a Stuart restoration. From 1688 until 1745 English politics were constantly concerned with plots of James II to regain his throne, and of the Old and Young Pretenders to win it, through the aid of Louis XIV and of the Jacobites.

389 47 **Toftida:** Katherine Tofts. She had sung for Rich at Drury Lane.

395 294 **his Grace:** the Duke of Ormond, who had promised Farquhar aid only to neglect his obligation.

395 306 **a peace is a trifle.** Hits at the Tories, who were eager to end the war.

396 397 **Enter Count Bellair.** A note in the 1721 edition states that after the first performance Farquhar cut out the following scene and the entire part of the Count, giving the lines spoken by that character in the Fifth Act to Foigard.

402 320 **gra** (Irish *gradh*): my love, or as a vague term of endearment.

402 385 **Le Brun** (1619–1690). He made the famous paintings for the Gobelin tapestries of Louis XIV. Since 1662 the manufactory has been controlled by the French government.

404 528 **beg . . . at the gallows-foot:** to petition for a man's release from the penalty under an agreement that he should marry the woman entering the plea.

407 198 **a Vigo business.** Refers to the Dutch-English destruction of the Spanish treasure-fleet at Vigo in 1702.

413 127 **the Edistone.** The first lighthouse on the Eddystone was finished in 1699 and wholly destroyed in 1703.

418 Epilogue. Inasmuch as Farquhar wrote these lines in his miserable last illness, the reference to Leuctra has special meaning. He was wrong, however, in thinking that Epaminondas died in the victory of the Thebans (371 B.C.) over the Spartans; he fell at Mantinea nine years later.

418 14 **Sergeant Kite:** the hero of *The Recruiting Officer*.

CATO

Addison drew the facts of his *Cato* from Plutarch and the style from French classical tragedy; he also witnessed an opera dealing with a like theme while visiting Venice in 1701. Steele's Preface to *The Drummer* may well be taken as proof that Addison had long had four acts of the play in writing when the pleas of friends led him, in 1713, to complete the play within a week.

Cato was immediately successful. It had a run of nearly a month in London and within the year went through eight editions. Much of this popu-

larity arose through political implications read into its lines. In 1713 the Tories controlled English politics. With substantial help Addison was then directing Whig propaganda, with a mind to popularize war as an aid to foreign trade and to set up the rich merchant class of London in at least equal authority with the aristocratic Tories. The Whigs realized how great Tory and Catholic influence would become in case Queen Anne, then ill and without direct heir, should be succeeded by a Stuart; moreover they saw in the attempt of Oxford to make an end of all foreign trade wars a move to restrict individual liberty at once through an increase of Tory power everywhere. These circumstances gave point to Cato's lines against a Roman dictator. The Whigs were jubilant, and the Tories discreetly concealed their discomfiture by applauding the play with equal vigor.

Cato interests modern readers as an example of English classical tragedy and as the embodiment of Addison's dramatic criticism. Both the play and the criticism kept Dryden's principles in force, with the result that tragedy in England remained under foreign influence until Garrick's acting brought writers to their senses. Neither Dryden nor Addison slavishly restated the principles of the continent, but their plays had greater influence than their critical writings. The *Spectator* papers on tragedy (Nos. 39, 40, 41, and 42) praise the native genius of Shakespeare and discount the mechanical award of poetic justice, but such concessions to Elizabethan traditions had no practical share in Addison's use of the French rules. Voltaire (in *Sur la tragédie*) could see in *Cato* the "élégance mâle et énergique" of Corneille; to his mind Addison was the first Englishman to write a "tragédie raisonnable."

Marks of classical regularity in structure are sufficiently evident. The play holds to the unities of time, place, and action. Its characters are all of noble rank, and the catastrophe involves the ruin of a great man. The mode of scene division is that of the contemporary French stage, as is the use of confidants for expository purposes in place of soliloquies. Poetic justice is strictly administered, and situations involving the laws of decorum are treated according to settled practice. Addison's elevation of philosophical precepts at the expense of love interest naturally won Voltaire's praise; yet in the susceptibility of all Addison's characters to the influence of others there seems to be a trace of English heroic drama, and his use of blank verse gives another reason for counting him partly indebted to native traditions. Only these marks and the occasional tags reminiscent of *Julius Cæsar* draw the play out of the formalized rules of French classical tragedy.

Cato was played on the English stage as late as 1811, and its appeal abroad was even greater than at home. The contrasting estimates of John Dennis (1713) and of J. Deschamps (1719) prove how naturally its dramatic style appealed to continental rather than English taste. The play was translated into French, Italian, and German, and was partially the source of J. C. Gottsched's *Der sterbende Cato* (1731). The traces of its influence have been considered by A. G. Hegnauer, in *Der Einfluss von Addison's Cato . . . in der 1. Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (1912).

419 Cato, Marcus Porcius (95–46 B.C.): called "Uticensis" to distinguish him from his great-grandfather. He was a powerful statesman at the time when he won Julius Cæsar's enmity by supporting Cicero against the Catilinarian conspirators. In his work towards the revival of an ancient free state he continually opposed the triumvirs, until at the break of their concord he made choice of Pompey's party. After the battle of Pharsalus he led a remnant through the Libyan deserts to Utica, where he made the final stand against Cæsar. There he took his own life in true Stoic fashion after seeing the last of his followers safely embarked on transports. This act rather than his philosophical power gave him the place of patron saint to the Roman Stoics, who two centuries later won state control under Marcus Aurelius.

419 ***Ecce . . .:*** behold a sight worthy of being regarded by a god who is intent upon his own handiwork—behold a pair worthy of a god, a brave man matched with Evil Fortune. I do not see, I declare, what finer sight Jupiter could find on earth, if he should wish to turn his mind to it, than the sight of Cato, after his party had more than once been defeated, yet standing upright amidst the ruins of the republic (Seneca, *De Div. Prov.*, 6).

419 Dramatis Personæ. The First Quarto shows the parts to have been played by these actors and actresses: men, Messrs. Booth, Keen, Mills, Wilks, Cibber, Powell, Ryan, and Bowman; women, Mesdames Oldfield and Porter.

419 Prologue. Pope's relations with Addison in 1713 were such that this contribution could have been due only to a temporizing spirit in politics and to a readiness to share in Addison's popularity.

419 9 Our author shuns . . . . The passage refers to the extremities of heroic drama. The Prologue further assails the vogue of Italian opera and French plays on the London stage.

419 23 While Cato . . . . This line should be compared with Pope's *Epistle to Doctor Arbuthnot*, line 219, in the satire on Addison first printed anonymously in *Mist's Journal*, 1722.

421 79 Juba. Juba was taken to Rome by Cæsar. Under Augustus he and Selene, the daughter of Antony and Cleopatra, received Numidia, the old kingdom of Juba's father.

439 37 Did he not dash . . . . Compare David's act, *1 Chronicles*, xi, 18.

442 19 Sempronius falls. The circumstances violate all the traditions of decorum surrounding the honorable death of a warrior.

450 Epilogue. This poorly related ending to *Cato* illustrates the practice of striving after smart effects in both prologues and epilogues, a fashion that owed much to Dryden. The lines were written by Sir Samuel Garth and spoken by Mistress Porter.

JANE SHORE

The account by Sir Thomas More gives the best historical record of Jane Shore, the title character of Rowe's play, produced first at Drury Lane on February 2, 1714. Other possible literary sources are the *Mirror for Magistrates*, Drayton's *Epistle*, and the ballad *Jane Shore* (in the Pepys collection); dramatic sources to be considered are *Richard III*, *The True Tragedie of Richard III*, Heywood's *Edward IV*, and a lost play *Jane Shore* by Chettle and Day. More's life of Richard III was presumably at least an indirect source, for it was well known in two sixteenth-century translations and through Holinshed (1577).

The true Jane Shore, wife of a London ordinary, became mistress of Edward IV. Following his death and the murderous rise of Richard III, all associates of Edward were cruelly persecuted. Lord Hastings, Lord Rivers, and Sir Richard Grey were among those beheaded. The queen and Jane Shore were accused of witchcraft; the latter endured public penance for improper living, was imprisoned for two years, and died in dire poverty.

With these facts Rowe fashioned a play "in imitation of Shakespeare's style," as he asserted, but merely so in theme, metre, and occasionally in phrasing. The regularity of plot structure is after the French style; a sentimental heroine was to satisfy an age that decried Shakespeare's "unsympathetic" treatment of women; poetic justice is made entirely human, with every punishment of evil-doing administered strictly by organized society; moral purpose is constantly evident; and even the difficult "unities" are partially observed. As for the characters, they talk too much and act too little to be Elizabethan in the best sense. For such reasons Rowe may be said to have had more concern for contemporary standards than his announcement suggests. It is an interesting proof of existing taste that *Jane Shore* should have held the stage at its first appearance for nineteen nights. Even the nineteenth century felt a human appeal in the central character, for the play was staged as late as 1880 and has been reprinted with great regularity. Largely because of its unbroken theatrical record the play deserves study for the enduring elements of tragedy, and from the combination of tendencies displayed it has a unique place among stage productions of the eighteenth century.

451 ***Conjunx* . . .**: where her former husband answers her every mood (*Æneid*, VI, 473–474).

451 Dramatis Personæ. In the First Quarto the parts are assigned in order to the following actors: men, Messrs. Cibber, Booth, Husbands, Bowman, Mills, and Wilks; women, Mesdames Porter and Oldfield.

451 Duke of Queensberry (1698–1778). The third duke of this name was praised in return for a favor of his father, who, when acting as Secretary of State for Scotland, made Rowe under-secretary.

453 3 The queen. By a former marriage Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV, had two sons, later called the Marquis of Dorset and Sir Richard Grey. Favors granted her family aroused enmity among the older nobility.

466 160 Doctor Shaw: Ralph Shaw (d. 1484), brother to the Lord Mayor of London. He was chosen by the Protector to proclaim in a sermon that the royal line was illegitimate. This he did on June 22, 1483.

470 227 Then judge yourselves. More gives this dramatic account; see also *Richard III*.

475 117 Can she—. Rowe evidently intended a pause to fill out the line.

481 In the First Quarto the text is followed by a book advertisement, with the date January 28, 1713–1714.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS

The Conscious Lovers was presented eighteen times during its first season, the first production being on November 7, 1722. Steele chose this title, after rejecting "The Fine Gentlemen" and "The Unfashionable Lovers," evidently feeling that the mutual devotion of the leading characters would be considered unusual. The comic dialogue of Tom and Phillis, which recalls similar lines in *The Beaux Stratagem*, was added as relief from this unnatural severity of tone in comedy. The main plot is based upon Terence's *Andria*, particularly on Acts I and II; yet the complete play belongs to a sort of comedy requiring special definition.

In 1722 sentimental comedy completed the first phase of its development in England after an irregular growth from the time of Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). Steele's *Conscious Lovers* was written when the new principles of comic construction had been well formulated. Otway in *The Orphan* had begun the reformation of tragedy along similar lines. In both sorts of drama sentimentalism was a revivifying process of appealing to natural human emotions through virtuous characters. Moral purpose was held essential, and, as in ancient tragedy, the dramatist was to arouse in his audience feelings of pity and sympathy. Stress fell upon the innate goodness of common men and women in sharp contrast to the hard mirth of high comedy and the fustian of neoclassical tragedy. The movement was a reaction against formulated laws due to the wishes of a changing public, for the wealthy merchant class and practical men of affairs among the nobility were displacing the leisure group that had patronized drama during Stuart times.

Furthermore sentimental comedy was made of moral tone in response to the public feeling symbolized by Jeremy Collier's *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698). The moral improvement, however, was but one influence toward the new type, and this striving for a moral while still keeping the framework of Restoration comedy caused many odd effects. In *Love's Last Shift* a devoted wife has the satisfaction of winning back her profligate husband, who returns home unpunished for his loose conduct. The same mingling of old and new may be found in Steele, though with him the two strains are kept apart by use of a main plot and a subplot. Another strange result of this moral intent was a wrenching of the concluding scenes in order to meet the demands of full poetic justice. At any cost in plausibility, vice was punished and virtue rewarded. Out of this practice came the false use of pathos that gives our present meaning to the word "sentimental," and from their inappropriately expressed "sentiments" the characters at length fell into a new artificiality inviting satire.

In the Cimberton plot Steele's *Conscious Lovers* was using dramatic conventions. The satire upon country coxcombs and the delayed entry of the leading characters may easily be paralleled in French and English comedy. In its satire upon dueling, cold-blooded marriage compacts, and pride of family, the play shows the same aim as many *Tatler* and *Spectator* essays; namely, to reform society. Steele was also interested in pleasing the Whig trading class of the city. His praise of foreign trade through the speeches of Sealand came from his wish that the Whig merchant be raised to social equality with the Tory aristocrat. In this general purpose Steele chose to emphasize the folly of dueling as the most absurd custom of all. The number of complimentary letters and poems sent him shows his success. It is only after observing what a variety of ends *The Conscious Lovers* aimed to attain and the variety of new and old comedy traditions embodied in its scenes that the reader discovers in the play a summary of Steele's social and dramatic doctrines.

The immediate attacks of Dennis and lesser critics started a pamphlet war lasting through the winter. Much of it had to do with Steele's free criticism of Etherege (*Spectator*, No. 65), whose *Sir Fopling Flutter* seemed to him "a perfect contradiction to good manners, good sense, and common honesty." From this beginning the controversy fell off into personalities at the expense of Cibber rather than Steele. None of the pamphlet and newspaper criticism has the point of Fielding's remark through Parson Adams—that *The Conscious Lovers* contained "some things almost solemn enough for a sermon." Its excess of moralizing is not justifiable, even as a sharp reaction from Restoration laxity; yet apart from tests under the rules of comedy this insistence on moral values made Steele's last play historically important.

482 *Illud genus . . .*: that kind of narrative which is presented by persons ought to be marked by gaiety of dialogue, diversity of character, seriousness, tenderness, hope, fear, suspicion, desire,

dissimulation, pity, variety of events, change of fortune, unexpected disaster, sudden joy, and a happy ending (Auctor de *Rhetor. ad Herennium*, I, 8).

482 Dramatis Personæ. The First Quarto shows the parts to have been played in order by the following actors: men, Messrs. Mills, Williams, Booth, Wilks, Griffin, Shepard, Cibber, Theophilus Cibber; women, Mesdames Moore, Thurmond, Oldfield, Booth, and Younger.

482 Dedication. In 1722 Steele held state posts of value. His object of praise naturally would be the king.

483 The Preface. Proves that the manuscript was revised for printing. It is hard to accept Steele's assertion that the play was written wholly as an attack on dueling.

483 a general. The general identified with this comment was Charles Churchill.

483 Carbonelli: a violinist, prominent on the London stage in 1722.

484 8 **Pinkey:** Pinkethman. (Aitken)

484 Act I, Scene I, compares very closely with the opening of Terence's *Andria*, a dialogue between Simo and Sosia. (A.)

487 262 **the Painted Chamber:** a room between the chamber of the House of Lords and that used by the House of Commons. The old Court of Requests was near it, and in these centers of activity at Westminster the servants loitering about commonly addressed one another by their masters' names.

487 293 **ridottos.** These were new in England in 1722. The amusement consisted of a musical evening followed by a general dance on the stage.

487 294 **Belsize** (House): in Hampstead and, like Ranelagh, a place for both indoor and outdoor amusement.

488 427 **poor Crispo's fate.** The operas of *Crispo* and *Griselda*, by Bononcini, were produced during 1722. This Italian composer had then been in London only two years. He became Handel's only noteworthy rival.

492 228 **She is of English birth. . . .** From here on Steele again used Terence.

498 294 **Signor Carbonelli . . . waits.** See Hogarth's prints for depictions of such scenes in a lady's morning-room. The appearance of a popular singer or musician was usually the complimentary offering of a suitor.

501 50 **Ah . . . I remember . . . .** Steele used the account earlier in the *Guardian*, No. 87, for June 20, 1713.

504 347 **Lycurgus:** the reputed author of the Spartan constitution.

516 15 **table book.** Scaland is looking for apt expressions before entering Indiana's house. A table book was then a small memorandum book, though later the name was applied also to such books as the old-fashioned autograph album.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

The popularity of *The Beggar's Opera* after its first production on January 29, 1728, is attested by a run of sixty-two performances during that season. As late as 1879 it was a stock piece for filling breaks in the bookings of London theatres. Now, in 1922, the play has gone through two unbroken years of production in England and America by excellent players, and in London a "Beggar's Opera Club" restricts its membership to those who have witnessed forty performances. The play now has won a permanent place with those of Goldsmith and Sheridan.

As source material Gay may have used Christopher Bullock's *A Woman's Revenge, or A Match in Newgate* (1715), which is a reworking of Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*. Shortly before there had been staged a play known as *The Prison Breaker, or The Adventures of Jack Sheppard*, but we have been unable to test a possible relationship here; as for the suggested indebtedness of the Lockit-Peachum quarrel to that of Cæsar and Brutus, there is little to recommend it. The living sources of *The Beggar's Opera* are to be found in the use of Swift's suggestion in a letter of 1716 to Pope, that a Newgate pastoral by Gay would be successful; this hint, caused by the dispute over the pastorals of Philips and Pope, Gay ten years later made into an opera uniting political, social, and dramatic satire in an original form. His airs are nearly all to be found in D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy* and Playford's *Dancing Master*, whence Gay, rather than John Pepusch, composer of the overture,[1] very likely selected them as he composed the new songs. The sources of his feeling towards Italian opera are to be found in the long record of such performances on the London stage after 1709, a vogue that naturally called for such rivalry as *The Beggar's Opera* professed. The taste for rogue literature arose from the execution in 1725 of Jonathan Wild, the thief-catcher, and of Jack Sheppard, the only highwayman to defy this

[1] Omitted from the text but available in various scores.

monopolist in commercialized thievery. Finally, Gay's political satire was derived from events in which the author himself was an active sharer.

This last-named material was undoubtedly increased after the events of 1727. For years Gay had expected patronage at the hands of the prince as soon as George I should pass on the succession to his son. Swift had similar hopes, though he shrewdly tried out both factions. Both writers, however, were bitterly disappointed when the new George II turned from his friends of the opposition and made Robert Walpole, his father's old counselor, his leading minister. His former friends felt deceived and cheated, so that there is no reason to wonder at Gay's indignant refusal of the place offered him as gentleman-usher to the Princess Louisa. Henceforth courts were to him merely centers of fraud. The personal hits at Walpole appear in the opening song and in the one to the air of "Greensleeves" (both vaguely credited to Swift[1]); in the quarrel of II, x, supposedly based upon a violent altercation with Lord Townshend; and in the references to misuse of authority. At the first performance Walpole took the sting from Gay's shafts by applauding with fine unconcern, but his feeling was strong enough to bring a prohibition upon Gay's sequel, *Polly*; this continuation of the Polly-Macheath story in a West Indian setting deserved such treatment on grounds of immoral language, but none of its satire had striking political application.

In its general satire upon social conditions *The Beggar's Opera* rightly attacked the government for its evil administration of Newgate Prison and also for permitting Jonathan Wild to handle professional criminals in precisely the fashion of Gay's Peachum. So much moral value the play clearly possessed, in spite of the abuse of eighteenth-century moralists, among them Defoe, who was strangely disposed to argue against his own type of writing. Thomas Herring, then preacher at Lincoln's Inn, delivered a sermon against the play and thus drew from Swift's *Intelligencer* (No. 3) a reply that contains all that may usefully be said concerning its moral content. It was not written to reform, but to amuse. In spite of this, its satire brought good results; social and political reforms came more easily after such courageous defiance of misused authority, and in these phases the play is a forerunner of much in Fielding's work. As for Italian opera, its popularity suffered greatly under the competition of plays cast in the new style.

Among the imitations of Gay's piece were Thomas Walker's *The Quaker's Opera* of the same year, Cibber's *Love in a Riddle* (1729), and numerous street ballads. Cibber's tardy attempt thus to make up the loss which he had incurred through rejecting Gay's play was entirely unsuccessful.[1]

522 *Nos haec . . .*: we know these things to be nothing (Martial, XIII, ii, 8).

522 **Dramatis Personæ.** In the First Quarto the parts are assigned in order as follows: men, Messrs. Hippesley, Hall, Walker, Clark, Bullock, Houghton, Smith, Lacy, Pitt, Eaton, Spiller, Morgan, Chapman, and Milward; women, Mesdames Martin, Fenton, Egleton, Martin, Holiday, Lacy, Rice, Rogers, Clarke, Morgan, Palin, and Salee.

522 **St. Giles's:** in Holborn, on the east and west thoroughfare, directly north of Covent Garden. The district was full of cheap lodging houses, a "sanctuary" for criminals and the scene of unrestrained brawls.

524 49 **Newgate:** used as a place of confinement for criminals, as were all the gatehouses in early times, and hence came the name given the prison structure standing there in the eighteenth century. From its noisome inclosure criminals were carried in carts along Holborn to Tyburn, the place of execution; these "progresses" were holiday occasions for the apprentices along the road. Marble Arch now stands near old Tyburn, and the Central Criminal Court (a short walk northwest of St. Paul's Cathedral) is on the site of Newgate Prison.

525 56 **Bagshot** (Heath): southwest of old London, then the scene of countless highway robberies.

525 62 **Marybone** (Marylebone): lies north of St. James's Park. The Gardens were among the most popular of London pleasure resorts.

527 16 **Redriff:** a district on the south bank of the Thames some distance east of the Tower.

[1] In Lewis Melville's *Life and Letters of John Gay* (1921) are given the sources of the tunes and also of the following songs as being written by others: Act I, Air I, Lord Chesterfield; Air VI, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams; Act II, Air VI, Mr. Fortescue, Master of the Rolls; Air XII, Dean Swift; Act III, Air IV, Lord Chesterfield.

[1] An elaborate record of such influences as appear in Hogarth's drawings of scenes from *The Beggar's Opera* may be found in Charles E. Pearce's "*Polly Peachum*" *and* "*The Beggar's Opera*" (1913). A comparison has been made between the play and our modern comic opera.

527 30 **Hockley in the Hole:** a pleasure garden for bear-baitings and bull-baitings. In his *Trivia* Gay says that Mondays and Thursdays were the days for such sports there.

527 36 **Old Bailey:** near Newgate Prison, the place of trial for crimes committed within London and Middlesex. In a house near the Justice Hall Court Jonathan Wild, the thief-catcher, lived until his execution in 1725.

530 147 **Tunbridge:** north of the center of old London.

532 59 **Oh, ponder well.** When Lavinia Fenton had finished this song, the Duke of Argyll is said to have exclaimed, "It will do—it must do! I see it in the eyes of 'em!" The first success was due partly to the acting of Spiller, a popular player of low-comic rôles.

533 10 **Jack Ketch** (d. 1686). Gave the nickname to succeeding executioners.

534 Air XV. Repeat the fourth and fifth lines of the song or give an equivalent time to the instruments.

542 Air [IX]. Repeat the last three lines of the song or give an equivalent time to the instruments.

544 Air [XIII]. The last two measures of the second line are for the instruments.

544 Air [XIV]. This air is evidently intended for "How Should I Your True Love Know," Ophelia's song. (Gratton Flood)

547 Air [XIX]. No name is given, but the air is evidently "Constant Billy," published in 1726. (Gratton Flood)

547 Air [XX]. Repeat the third line of each stanza or allow an equivalent time for the instruments.

555 13 **lay her death upon the gin.** Gin drinking in London was increasing in 1728 so rapidly that the grand jury of Middlesex recorded the practice as a main cause of immorality and disorder. Other causes mentioned were the number of beggars and the immorality of masquerades.

TOM THUMB

In its first form, under the simple title given above, *The Tragedy of Tragedies* appeared at the Haymarket on April 24, 1730. When seeking a framework for his burlesque Fielding naturally found *The Rehearsal* to be his best model; he confined his imitation, however, to satiric quotation and let pass the chance to caricature any dramatist personally. The characters are merely organs of speech and action, with bombastic names suggesting those of serious drama. Tom Thumb's story had been made the basis of a burlesque poem several years earlier, Dr. William Wagstaffe having written with it such notes as Fielding put into his second revision; but *A Commentary on the History of Tom Thumb* (1711) ridiculed only Addison's *Spectator* essay on Chevy Chase, whereas Fielding's play burlesques the standards of neoclassical drama, the weak motivation of heroic plays, the pretended learning of such prefaces as Dryden's, and the mass of ill-conceived similes put into the mouths of characters when the situation demanded deep feeling.

In all this sorting of materials Fielding was without a guide, and the points made by his notes demonstrate his success in selecting. The trick of "editing" and the assumed name as well came from Swift and Pope.[1] Without the notes *Tom Thumb* would today be obscure, and even at the time of its presentation playgoers could scarcely have caught all the hints. The 1731 edition, with the notes, a new preface,[2] and the character of Glumdalca added to the dramatis personæ, reached the reading public. *Tom Thumb* thereafter was a closet drama as well as a stage piece.

The play that made Swift laugh the second time in his entire life has the mock seriousness of that great satirist but not his deep gravity. The undercurrent of bitter feeling that lives in all of Swift's writings has no counterpart in *Tom Thumb*. Fielding's satire in both drama and novel grew from a strong common sense untouched by personal animus or disappointed hopes. In coarseness of humor the two men may be ranked as equals when at their worst, but their motives were different. Their hatred of sham may be considered similar in the broad sense; yet Swift's attacks always had a bearing upon his own situation in society, whereas with Fielding the strongest motive was a hope for immediate returns. *Tom Thumb* was not so much a conscious piece of critical writing as it was the opportune work of a writer quick to sense the reactions of popular taste.[3]

[1] *The Battle of the Books* and *The Dunciad* particularly.

[2] The first edition is in two acts. The second has added scenes in the same acts, as well as the preface and other material given in the notes; an anonymous extra act, The Battle of the Poets, was a satire on the poet laureate, Colley Cibber.

[3] Both the early and later versions are reprinted in J. T. Hillhouse's edition (1918), which is referred to hereafter by (H.).

565 Dramatis Personæ. In the 1731 edition the parts are assigned in order as follows: Mr. Mullart, Miss Jones, Mr. Lacy, Mr. Hallam (Merlin and Physician), Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Wathan, Mr. Ayres, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Watson, Mr. Dove, Mrs. Mullart, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Dove.

565 *egregium* . . .: a remarkable and exceedingly valuable work, to be far preferred to other tragedies, both ancient and modern.

565 Bentley, Richard. He is treated as a pedantic scholar. Like Pieter Burmann (the Elder), also mentioned here, he was a very great scholar in the classics.

565 *Citius* . . .: I should be more ready to believe that Mævius wrote the Æneid than that your Scriblerus wrote this tragedy, the author of which I doubt not was recorded by Seneca himself.

566 *Heroum* . . .: easily the first of tragic heroes.

566 the Looking-Glass. This shop bore Midwinter's name in 1721. (H.)

566 Mairet, Jean de (1604–1686): a French dramatist. His *Sophonisbe* (1634) was among the first "regular" tragedies of the French school. The other writers mentioned are familiar. Fielding's comment here was inspired by Corneille's prefatory comment to his play of this title.

567 *Telephus* . . .: Telephus and Peleus, when both are poverty-stricken exiles, abandon bombast and sesquipedalian words (*Ars Poetica*, 96–97).

567 *dolere* . . .: to express grief in prosaic language (*Ars Poetica*, 95).

567 *Quid est* . . .: an abbreviated form of a sentence in Cicero, *De Oratore*, I, 12, 51. Fielding gives a loose translation of his version.

567 *Omne genus* . . .: in gravity tragedy surpasses every other form of writing (Ovid, *Tristia*, II, 381). (H.)

568 *Quae* . . .: these things I do not despise, because I have never read them (Cicero, *Tusc.*, II, 7, which, instead of *quae*, has *quos*, referring to *libri*).

569 10 **the giants in Guildhall**: large wooden figures, called Gog and Magog.

569 Justus Lipsius (1547–1606): a great Belgian scholar. The sentence given as from his works means, It is well understood that Tom Thumb was no other than Hercules.

569 *Risum teneatis* . . .: restrain your mirth, my friends (*Ars Poetica*, 5).

569 *Omne majus* . . .: every greater contains in itself a less, but a less cannot contain in itself a greater. There were two Scaligers, father and son, both distinguished scholars of the sixteenth century.

573 80 **pos'**: positive.

574 3 **Monmouth-street** and **Fleet-Ditch**: unsavory allusions, the former being then an old-clothes district.

578 12 **Bantam**: the hero of Fielding's *The Author's Farce*.

578 13 **the king of Brentford**: a notion from *The Rehearsal* (q.v.).

579 32 **lead apes in hell.** Supposedly the consequence of dying an old maid.

580 19 **durgen**: a dwarf.

583 *Curae leves* . . . : light cares speak out, the weighty have no words (*Phaedra*, 607).

584 The second quotation in the notes is from Banks's *Albion Queens*; the second and third lines are from *The Conquest of Granada*. The last quotation in the first column is from Theobald's *The Persian Princess*.

586 7 **I am a ghost.** Fielding's note refers to an anecdote regarding John Dennis and his known distaste for punning remarks. By chance Congreve and Purcell met him in a London tavern. Purcell, to be rid of his company, made a very bad pun, whereupon Dennis quit their company exclaiming, "God's death, sir, the man that will make such an execrable pun as that in my company, will pick my pocket." (H.)

586 *Te premet* . . .: night will overpower you, and the storied shades (*Carmina*, I, iv, 16).

587 16 **the Red Sea.** Supposedly the bane of ghosts.

589 *Credat* . . .: the Jew Apella may believe it (if he likes), not I (Horace, *Satires*, I, v, 100).

THE LONDON MERCHANT

The source of *The London Merchant* was undoubtedly *The Ballad of George Barnwell*, a popular poem at least as early as Restoration times. When the play was first presented at Drury Lane, on June 22, 1731, hundreds of copies of the old ballad were sold on the streets of London. It is written in two parts of forty-five stanzas each, with a link stanza, and contains the entire story of the two central figures of the play, though in the original Barnwell is hanged in Polonia for a second murderous

act after fleeing from England. None of the other characters appear.

Lillo's additions to this story and his change of the ending prove a continued demand from the London Whigs for dramas of everyday life with a didactic tone. For many years sentimental comedy had met this demand, but before Lillo few eighteenth-century writers had experimented with domestic tragedy. Southerne, Rowe, and Otway were the only important writers in that style immediately preceding Lillo, and their works had less didactic intent than most of the new comedy. Aaron Hill's play *The Fatal Extravagance* (1721) had given a pathetic, moralizing turn to the domestic type of tragedy, and this may have affected Lillo in his choice of material; yet the feeling that society needed admonition was very general, and in his Dedication Lillo sufficiently explains why *The London Merchant* is a tract. Instead of a conscious intent to imitate contemporary writers, he was looking farther back to Shakespeare's improvement upon Aristotle's principles through the use of common persons in a tragic action. Both the Dedication and the play itself prove Lillo to have been wisely observant of human values in older dramatic literature. His characters lost individual distinction through the heavy stress upon the moral lesson involved, but they brought common life back to the tragic stage.

In several details *The London Merchant* shows Lillo a student of English literature. His Dedication is an estimate of the Aristotelian theory, he uses soliloquy freely for exposition, and his dramatis personæ is in Bunyan's style of Puritan nomenclature. He has several mistress-maid dialogues, and those between Millwood and Barnwell recall the love-and-honor debates of heroic drama. The Biblical imagery and Miltonic conceptions belong to eighteenth-century literary traditions and also to the Nonconformist literature that Lillo would naturally have read. Though he makes no comment on using prose for tragedy, the change from custom is easily understood in the light of his determination to bring reality into his work.

How well Lillo succeeded in giving his public what it wanted, may be judged from the fact that in a summer season *The London Merchant* held the stage for twenty nights and then became a stock piece. As a moral lesson to the apprentices, it was acted for years at Easter and Christmas; the custom held until far into the nineteenth century in spite of Charles Lamb's protest that the play was an insult to their morality and a "nauseous sermon" that still made "uncle-murder too trivial." The play had an illustrious revival in 1796, when Charles Kemble and Mrs. Siddons put it on the boards, and Henry Irving frequently played the rôle of George Barnwell nearly a century later.

Its literary history has been almost as striking. Within ten years it went through seven editions and since has been reprinted constantly. Dutch, French, and German translations of *The London Merchant* appeared shortly after its English printing, and in France the play had a marked influence through the impression made upon Diderot. His critical writings, plays, and correspondence show that *The London Merchant* inspired him to create a type of serious drama dealing with bourgeois French life. Through Diderot the feeling was passed on to Lessing. Much might be said regarding the possible influence of Lillo's play in forming Richardson's ideas of plot and characterization and thus the whole school of sentimental fiction, but there the actual indebtedness is not directly admitted as in the case of Diderot. The scene inserted in the last act several years after first publication of the play may demonstrate the increasing demand for vivid realism that affected all forms of literature after 1750.

594 Dramatis Personæ. The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: men, Messrs. Bridgewater, Roberts, Cibber, Jr., Mills, and Wetherilt; women, Mesdames Cibber, Butler, and Charke.

594 Dedication. The dedication of the play to Sir John Eyles was most suitable, inasmuch as he had long held office for the city of London. He had represented the city in Parliament and had been Lord Mayor, the second of his family to hold that office.

594 the South Sea Company: organized in 1711 with a monopoly of British trade with South America and the Pacific Islands. It caused wild speculation and resulting disaster in 1720, the year when Law's Mississippi Company brought similar ill fortune to France. The company was reorganized and operated until 1750, though never successfully.

595 Mr. Cibber, Jun.: Theophilus Cibber, the son of Colley Cibber, well known as an actor and manager from 1730 to 1742. He also edited a *Lives of the Poets* (1753), for which most of the material was culled from earlier writers.

596 7 the loan . . . from Genoa. Dates the action as happening before Spain lost her Armada in 1588.

596 48 Walsingham, Sir Francis (*c.* 1530–1590): secretary-of-state at the time and Elizabeth's insistent adviser toward a war policy.

618 35 In pride . . . . An instance of the slurs cast upon the Catholics until the failure, in 1745, of the last Jacobite rebellion freed men's minds from the constant fear of a Catholic ruler.

618 37 suburb-magistrates. Ruling the courts of sections outside the old city, these magistrates had beggars arrested as a means to fees. Lillo indirectly praises the city merchants thus for their good government.

624 Scene XI. This is the concluding scene of the First Quarto. In the fifth edition the play was enlarged by the addition of the following; no copies are now extant, but Genest records (III, 295–296) that it was advertised for publication on February 8, 1735 (N.S.). The present printing is from the seventh (1740) edition, as given by A. W. Ward in the *Belles Lettres* series.

Most of these speeches can be scanned as blank verse.

[Scene XII]

The place of execution. The gallows and ladders at the farther end of the stage. A crowd of spectators.

Blunt *and* Lucy

Lucy. Heavens! what a throng!

Blunt. How terrible is death when thus prepared!

Lucy. Support them, Heaven! thou only can support them; all other help is vain.

Officer. (*Within*) Make way there; make way and give the prisoners room!

Lucy. They are here; observe them well! How humble and composed young Barnwell seems! But Millwood looks wild, ruffled with passion, confounded and amazed.

Enter Barnwell, Millwood, Officers *and* Executioners

Barnwell. See, Millwood, see: our journey's at an end. Life, like a tale that's told, is passed away[1]; that short but dark and unknown passage, death, is all the space 'tween us and endless joys, or woes eternal.

Millwood. Is this the end of all my flattering hopes? Were youth and beauty given me for a curse, and wisdom only to insure my ruin? They were, they were! Heaven, thou hast done thy worst. Or, if thou hast in store some untried plague—somewhat that's worse than shame, despair and death, unpitied death, confirmed despair and soul confounding shame—something that men and angels can't describe, and only fiends, who bear it, can conceive: now pour it—now, on this devoted head, that I may feel the worst thou canst inflict, and bid defiance to thy utmost power!

Barnwell. Yet, ere we pass the dreadful gulf of death—yet, ere you're plunged in everlasting woe, oh, bend your stubborn knees and harder heart, humbly to deprecate the wrath divine! Who knows but Heaven, in your dying moments, may bestow that grace and mercy which your life despised!

Millwood. Why name you mercy to a wretch like me? Mercy's beyond my hope—almost beyond my wish. I can't repent, nor ask to be forgiven.

Barnwell. Oh, think what 'tis to be for ever, ever miserable; nor with vain pride oppose a Power that's able to destroy you!

Millwood. That will destroy me. I feel it will. A deluge of wrath is pouring on my soul. Chains, darkness, wheels, racks, sharp stinging scorpions, molten lead, and seas of sulphur, are light to what I feel.

Barnwell. Oh, add not to your vast account despair—a sin more injurious to Heaven than all you've yet committed.

Millwood. Oh, I have sinned beyond the reach of mercy!

Barnwell. Oh, say not so; 'tis blasphemy to think it. As yon bright roof is higher than the earth, so, and much more, does Heaven's goodness pass our apprehension. Oh, what created being shall presume to circumscribe mercy, that knows no bounds?

Millwood. This yields no hope. Tho' mercy may be boundless, yet 'tis free; and I was doomed before the world began, to endless pains, and thou to joys eternal.

Barnwell. O gracious Heaven! extend thy pity to her! Let thy rich mercy flow in plenteous streams, to chase her fears and heal her wounded soul!

Millwood. It will not be. Your prayers are lost in air, or else returned, perhaps with double blessing, to your bosom; but me they help not.

Barnwell. Yet hear me, Millwood!

[1] Psalms, xc, 9.

MILLWOOD. Away, I will not hear thee. I tell thee, youth, I am by Heaven devoted a dreadful instance of its power to punish. (BARNWELL *seems to pray*) If thou wilt pray, pray for thyself, not me! How doth his fervent soul mount with his words, and both ascend to heaven—that heaven whose gates are shut with adamantine bars against my prayers, had I the will to pray.—I cannot bear it! Sure, 'tis the worst of torments to behold others enjoy that bliss that we must never taste!

OFFICER. The utmost limit of your time's expired.

MILLWOOD. Encompassed with horror, whither must I go? I would not live—nor die. That I could cease to be, or ne'er had been!

BARNWELL. Since peace and comfort are denied her here, may she find mercy where she least expects it, and this be all her hell!—From our example may all be taught to fly the first approach of vice; but, if o'ertaken

> By strong temptation, weakness, or surprise,
> Lament their guilt and by repentance rise!
> Th'impenitent alone die unforgiven;
> To sin's like man, and to forgive like Heaven.
> *Exeunt*

625 8 cocked up in cue. Refers to a way of wearing one's hat jauntily.

DOUGLAS

The tragedy of *Douglas* was first staged at the unlicensed Canongate Theatre, Edinburgh, on December 14, 1756, after Garrick had a second time declined Home's work for Drury Lane.[1] When Rich brought it out at Covent Garden on March 14, 1757, its popularity was already assured by the welcome given it by the Edinburgh public, and Garrick was left to make tardy and unsuccessful reparation by staging Home's *Agis* later in the season. The pamphlets inspired by the censure of the Edinburgh and Glasgow presbyteries upon ministers who frequented the theatre and wrote plays made *Douglas* even more generally known.

The source is to be found in the old ballad of "Childe Maurice," the story of a youth unjustly charged with improper relations with the wife of Lord Barnard and murdered before the revelation that he was son to Lady Barnard by a former husband. The derivation is made certain by the fact that Home's heroine was called Lady Barnard in the Edinburgh presentation; before the London presentation and printing the name was changed to its present form. The plot has other ballad material in the story (Act IV) of the hermit's unwitting murder of his own brother. The rivalry of the families of Malcolm and Douglas, as well as the secret marriage, recall similar details in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the tale of a foundling with precious jewels being cared for by country folk suggests the plot of *The Tempest* as still another source. The Prologue reference to the historic Percy and Douglas quarrels is confusing, for the internal evidence of the play would throw it back to a setting near the middle of the twelfth century. Actually, there is no attempt to give a true historical basis, even in the references to a Danish invasion, but merely to utilize the fund of Scottish tradition for a popular appeal.

The intention of Home to glorify Scottish legends by a literary use was undoubtedly due to his friendship with the poet Collins, who dedicated to him his "Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands," but it is idle to speculate on which was the originator of the new movement. Both shared in revivifying English literature by a return to popular material. The philosopher David Hume was so extravagant in his praises of Home's *Douglas* that the play gained at first an artificial importance; yet despite such casual circumstances it has a secure place in the movement soon after made general by the fame of the Ossian poems. The imaginative coloring of *Douglas*, its free flowing verse form, and the regularity of its plot structure warrant much of the praise bestowed upon it by contemporaries. An excellent summary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1757, shows a real appreciation of Home's ability in weaving scattered strands of narrative into a strong dramatic fabric.

Students of *Douglas* will do well to read Goldsmith's essay in the *Monthly Review* for May, 1757, and Scott's essay on Home in the *Quarterly Review* for June, 1827. Alexander Carlyle's ironic defense against the Calvinistic theologians of Edinburgh is also important.[1] Tests may be made of the supposed structural relationship with Voltaire's *Mérope*, with Aaron Hill's play (1749)

[1] In 1773, when Garrick rejected his comedy, Home began his letter of reply thus: "If Shakespeare's statue at Hampton had pulled off one of his marble slippers and hit me a slap in the face, I could not have been more surprised than with your letter."

[1] Reprinted in Alice E. Gipson's *John Home: a Study of his Life and Works*, etc. (1917). The satire in Thackeray's *Virginians* is well known.

of the same name, and in other respects with Otway's *Orphan* and Rowe's *Ambitious Stepmother*.

626 *Non ego . . .*: I am no prophet, but I understand the bygone age.

626 **Dramatis Personæ.** The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: men, Messrs. Younger, Love, Diggs, and Hayman; women, Mesdames Ward and Hopkins.

626 **Dedication.** This does not appear in the 1757 edition but is undoubtedly Home's. It was probably printed first in an edition issued near the time of George III's coronation in 1760.

627 4 **Percy** and **Douglas:** the names of English and Scotch families whose fame has been spread through history and literature from the time of Froissart's *Chronicles* and John Barbour's *Bruce*. Sir James (1286–1330) and Sir William Douglas (1327–1384) made their names a terror to northern England, and James, second Earl of Douglas (*c.* 1358–1388), in 1388 fought the Percy to his own death but a Scottish victory at Otterburn.

630 190 **the Carron:** a deep inlet on the west coast opposite the island of Skye.

632 42 **the Grampian hills.** These hills form a low chain dividing the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland.

636 30 **the fatal secret:** that of her marriage with Douglas. Home evidently expected his audience quickly to apply the remark of Anna regarding the jewel to the supposed murder of the lost child.

639 287 **Bass Rock:** lies off the headland south of the Firth of Forth. The district thereabouts was familiar to Home through his tenancy of the church at Athelstaneford.

641 59 **Godfredo.** Godfrey of Bouillon (*c.* 1060–1100) led one of the four divisions forming the Crusade of the Princes (1096). Since the hermit fought under Godfrey, Home's *Douglas* should be set about 1150.

652 **the Epilogue.** This appears in certain impressions of the first edition, but on a separate sheet and printed in fainter ink. These facts have bearing on the assertion that Home would not write one. The supposition is that Barry was the author.

THE GOOD-NATURED MAN

This play had a hint, as Goldsmith confessed, from Johnson's sketch of Suspirus in *The Rambler*, No. 59; otherwise it seems wholly original. Honeywood has many characteristics of his creator, and the whole play has Goldsmith's genial nature in its kindly characterization and in a plot that lacks all bitterness of satire. In short, *The Good-Natured Man* is Goldsmith himself in an enduring form.

When produced at Covent Garden on January 29, 1768, after lying for a long time in manuscript, *The Good-Natured Man* stood in open rivalry with Kelly's sentimental comedy *False Delicacy*. Having driven Goldsmith to Colman, the rival manager, David Garrick emphasized his distaste for its "common" characters by producing a fashionable play by London's most popular playwright only six days before *The Good-Natured Man* was put on the boards. The taste of the times was such that *False Delicacy* won the contest; for though Goldsmith's first play ran for nine nights and was printed promptly, it quickly fell from favor as being too realistic and commonplace in its materials.

Little can be said, it must be admitted, in behalf of the plot. Its most farcical detail is in Sir William's explanation of his meeting with Leontine in Paris, but several others are almost as improbable. If the reader can ignore for a few pages the general lack of plausibility, he will forget it in his growing enjoyment of the humorous situations. As for the characterization, that too must be accepted as inartistic but highly amusing. Croaker and the bailiff are well drawn, but there is much of the farcical in all.

When considered solely on its merits, *The Good-Natured Man* is seen to be weak structurally and to lack finely drawn characters. Playmaking was not a serious pursuit with Goldsmith; the stage was simply another avenue to a living. There as everywhere in his writings he succeeded through a native kindliness and unmistakable skill in artless expression. Like most of his writings, *The Good-Natured Man* wins favor without an observance of rigid rules or traditions.

653 **Dramatis Personæ.** The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: men, Messrs. Powell, Shuter, Woodward, Clarke, Bensley, Dunstall, Cushing, R. Smith, Holtom, Quick; women, Mesdames Bulkley, Mattocks, Pitt, Green, and White.

653 **Prologue.** The first two lines show the state of Johnson's mind during the year when this prologue was his only published work.

653 5 **anxious bard.** Stood "little bard" in the original and raised a laugh at the first performance. The change was made at Goldsmith's request.

658 368 **the late earthquake.** Possibly refers to the earthquakes of February and March, 1750, which threw London into a turmoil. The Bishop of London preached a warning sermon that sold to the number of 40,000 copies, and the prophecy of a third visitation for the month of April drove hundreds of citizens into the fields.

662 102 **another-guess:** of another sort.

669 170 **Hawke,** Baron Edward (1705–1781). He was at the time out of active service after having protected England in 1759 from a French invasion. Baron Jeffrey Amherst (1717–1797) had led the forces in North America at the time of Wolfe's famous conquest of Quebec (1759).

679 508 **the house of Loretto:** the Santa Casa at Loretto in eastern Italy. It is held to be the veritable shrine of the Virgin brought by angels from Nazareth and set down there on December 10, 1294. The lofty marble screen surrounding it is one of the most beautiful of Renaissance works.

685 454 **Paoli:** general-in-chief of Corsica before its capture by the French, later an acquaintance of Goldsmith and Johnson.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

She Stoops to Conquer had a stormy life before its initial appearance at Covent Garden on March 15, 1773. First Colman, then Garrick, rejected the manuscript; finally it fell back into Colman's hands. Actors refused the rôles of Young Marlow, Miss Hardcastle, and Tony, called them impossible, and broke up rehearsals with their ridicule. Other titles were rejected one after another—the present subtitle, *The Old House a New Inn*, *The Belle's Stratagem*—until Goldsmith himself finally hit upon the present form. Horace Walpole's comment on the title epitomizes hostile criticism in the words, "Stoops! indeed, so she does; she is dragged up to the knees and has trudged all the way from Southwark fair!" Yet the first production was a great success. Johnson's timely applause kept the audience above the openly displayed distaste of the injured sentimentalists, so that had Goldsmith been courageous enough to face a first-night crowd after his previous trial he undoubtedly would have enjoyed a triumph.

The play is farcical because frankly careless of the formal rules of comic structure. Goldsmith is at once the bane of critics and the joy of his public, for his effects are beyond explanation according to tangible reasons. All that can be said he himself put into essays on the literature and drama of his own time; *She Stoops to Conquer* is a full justification of his criticism. As his basis, Goldsmith assumes that true humor resides in incongruity. This must appear in characters of common social estate, inasmuch as educated persons of exalted station indulge in wit rather than humor. To please the common man, the rôles of a comedy must show "low" characteristics, thus granting room for that self-satisfaction arising from a sense of superiority in judgment or taste. Sentimental comedy undoubtedly helped Goldsmith to reach this conclusion. He saw the folly in attempting to restrict comedy to "high" characters as the "ancients" had ruled for tragedy, and of making moral instruction its object.

Consequently *She Stoops to Conquer* was cast with only "low" characters and with no formal, purposeful plot structure. It is a sublimation of *The Good-Natured Man*, with a heavy obligation to Farquhar for situations and general atmosphere. The absurd argument over a bill of fare and other bits of foolery can be found in earlier plays, but their presence here requires no historical disquisition; Goldsmith's pervading spirit of good-fellowship is the life-giving element.

689 Dramatis Personæ. The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: men, Messrs. Gardner, Lewes, Shuter, Du Bellamy, Quick, Saunders; women, Mesdames Green, Bulkley, Kniveton, and Willems.

689 Dedication. The dedication to Doctor Johnson was to be expected from the long friendship of the two. George Colman, manager of Covent Garden Theatre, had also aided Goldsmith with his first play and had advised him in certain revisions of this piece.

689 Prologue. Opens the attack upon sentimental comedy with its allusions to the popular low-comedy actor Ned Shuter, who had made *The Good-Natured Man* a success.

693 Song. It was sung to the tune of "The Humors of Ballamagairy," to which Goldsmith had set the following song, which was omitted because Mrs. Bulkley could not sing:

Ah, me! when shall I marry me!
Lovers are plenty but fail to relieve me.
He, fond youth, that could carry me,
Offers to love but means to deceive me.
But I will rally and combat the ruiner:
Not a look nor a smile shall my passion discover;
She that gives all to a false one pursuing her,
Makes but a penitent and loses a lover.

I have not found at what point the song was intended to be sung.

695 177 **find out the longitude.** This problem concerned men greatly in the mid-eighteenth century. In 1755 Johnson had written the account of a method, the book being published under the name of Zachariah Williams with an Italian translation by Joseph Baretti on alternate pages.

698 215 **[Charles].** The First Quarto has "George."

698 231 **Denain:** the scene of a defeat of the English and their allies at the hands of the French in 1712.

701 472 **the laws of marriage.** Ridiculed here as a slur on the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, which King George III had demanded following the marriages of the dukes of Cumberland and Gloucester against his pleasure. The act required the descendants of George II thereafter to obtain the king's consent for marriage within the kingdom. This attack helped make the act unpopular.

703 713 **Ranelagh . . . .** The mixing up of reputable and improper resorts pleased Goldsmith's audience by its signs of rustic simplicity. The Borough of Southwark and Tower Wharf had no claim to respectability, whereas the Pantheon (opened in 1771) and Ranelagh were scenes of masquerades in which the nobility shared.

704 739 **inoculation.** Inoculation against smallpox had been introduced from the East in the year 1718, by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and in 1746 the Smallpox Hospital was opened; yet the treatment was still looked on with disfavor and suspicion. Goldsmith shows understanding of its value.

725 Epilogue. The imitations of Shakespeare are evident enough to require no annotation.

726 15 **Sadler's Wells:** in Islington, the place of tight-rope dancing, tumbling, and common sports.

THE RIVALS

Sheridan's *Rivals*, his first comedy to be staged, went on at Covent Garden on January 17, 1775, as a hasty creation from odd bits of earlier work and living impressions. Harris, the manager, called for a play to meet his needs, with the result that after one performance the new production was withdrawn perforce for revision and abridgment. As a further help to its success Lee's rôle was given to the popular comedian Clinch. Contemporary criticism indicates also that the first version had much material reflecting upon the Irish gentry; but, lacking the original manuscript, we can only surmise what were the internal changes.

The Rivals has had such extensive study for sources that a summary of findings seems impossible. Dogberry is the most famous forerunner of Mrs. Malaprop, who has aroused more discussion than any other character of the play; Lydia Languish has an ancestry in Steele's *Tender Husband* and in Colman's comedies. The other characters can be found many times over in eighteenth-century comedy and prose fiction.

The play has no set principles of structure. Its plot is irregular. On this point it may be well to justify the title, which is often ignored, by explaining that Acres and "Beverley" are rivals through love of Lydia; O'Trigger, supposing "Delia" to be Lydia instead of her fatuous aunt, is a rival of Captain Absolute under his true name. Acres also furnishes incitement for the Julia-Faulkland plot by his temporary hindrances and so trues the secondary story with the main narrative. By contrast with *The School for Scandal* the characters have few traits of high comedy, being nearer to nature in the sense of Goldsmith's work, whereby they bring spontaneous satisfaction to both trained and uncritical audiences.

727 Dramatis Personæ. The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: men, Messrs. Shuter, Woodward, Lewis, Quick, Clinch, Lewis, Dunstall, Fearon; women, Mrs. Green, Miss Barsanti, Mrs. Bulkley, and Mrs. Lessingham.

731 145 **Gydes' Porch:** rooms on the walk named after the owner.

731 5 *The Reward of Constancy,* etc. The novels listed here form a satire upon sentimental fiction. Nettleton's edition has a careful record of their authors and substance. Aside from the well-known works of Mackenzie, Sterne, and Smollett, the interesting ones are *The Mistakes of the Heart* (1769), which is a French memoir imitative of Rousseau and Richardson; *The Tears of Sensibility* (1773), another translation from French; and *The Whole Duty of Man*, a popular book of devotions. The group would repay study from the standpoint of types of fiction.

734 223 **Mrs. Chapone . . . Fordyce . . . Chesterfield's:** Hester Chapone (1727–1801), a moralizing letter-writer of the time, best known for her book *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*, 1773. Fordyce wrote *Sermons to Young*

Women (1765). Chesterfield's letters are too well known to require comment.

741 432 the oath . . . . A parody on Pope's "The sound must seem an echo of the sense." (Aitken)

THE DUENNA

The Duenna, a comic opera in the tradition of Gay, was first produced on November 21, 1775, at Covent Garden. The lyrics are spontaneous and musical, but not always set to meet the spirit of the situation. Herein Sheridan shows his youthfulness, as he does likewise in an evident reliance upon time-tried intrigues and stock characters.

The wit of high comedy is here, but with it a great deal of buffoonery. *The Duenna* is consequently of interest to-day by comparison with *The Rivals*, where Sheridan most successfully appealed to the varied elements in his audiences, and with Gay's opera. Much of this rough vigor is ignored in reading, so that the play has suffered by comparison with his later works of finer finish and artless grace. Revivals of *The Duenna* have often brought forth favoring criticism, whereas the printed pages have been to many only the record of Sheridan's experimentation in playmaking.

Specific instances where action gives power are to be noted in the lively incongruities in all the actions of Jerome and Isaac; likewise, the suspense of Act III is lost unless a reader can visualize clearly the scenes wherein Clara and Louisa mystify their lovers by remaining veiled. The modern reader is in these parts too apt to set down as farcical what in living action becomes highly diverting and human.

The Duenna quickly fell below the record of its first season, when it was staged seventy-five nights, but its stage popularity has been unbroken in both England and America.

774 Dramatis Personæ. The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: men, Messrs. Wilson, Mattocks, Du Bellamy, Leoni, Quick, Mahon, Wewitzer, and Castevens; women, Mrs. Mattocks, Miss Brown, and Mrs. Green.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

The School for Scandal was staged at Drury Lane on May 8, 1777, before a highly expectant audience. During its composition Sheridan's closest friends encouraged him in every way; Garrick, for example, assisted at the rehearsals and likewise wrote a spirited prologue. Government officials tried to prevent the production through fear that the satire on usury might injure Hopkins, their candidate for Lord Chamberlain, at the approaching election, but their failure only heightened the expectancy. Probably no play of the century had a finer assemblage or more auspicious circumstances for its first performance. Its success was instantaneous.

The history of *The School for Scandal* dates back to two sketches drafted several years earlier. Sheridan had outlined *The Slanderers—a Pump-Room Scene*, but had failed to give it narrative basis. This was furnished by his "Clerimont" story of an orphaned dependent. The Teazle family disputes gave good material for developed incidents, but it was through the acts of the returning uncle that Sheridan derived his best suspense. Here was substance of his own time, when East India was in common belief a source of wealth and mystery; it gave meaning to the frivolous scenes of brilliant dialogue that are after all the characteristic elements of the play.

The plot is less perplexing than in Congreve's puzzling *Way of the World*, but still difficult to follow. Lady Sneerwell's scheme to destroy the friendship of Maria and Charles for her own advantage can be traced in Sir Peter's lines, though scarcely at all anywhere else. Joseph dupes Sir Peter in a side intrigue against Lady Teazle while his chief end is to win Maria and her fortune; in this last appears the familiar spring of eighteenth-century comedy. Yet for situations these threads of incident are weak in comparison with the Teazle family quarrels and Sir Oliver's tests of his nephews, so that at the end of the second scene of Act IV the spectator is in a maze of cross purposes. He is apt to drop all thought of narrative sequence or individual motive. The screen scene is consequently a master stroke for leading these loosely related stories toward a harmoniously united conclusion.

In estimating the characters it is well to remember that Joseph, Sir Benjamin, and Crabtree are as active spokesmen at the "scandalous club" as are any of the women. Sheridan's assemblages of gossips have no sex distinctions. The persons concerned in these mongering conclaves lose individuality through their attempts to outdo one another, whereas the other characters preserve their personalities by being absent. Charles, Uncle Oliver, and Moses are far more real than Lady Sneerwell, Mistress Candour, or

even Sir Benjamin. Lady Teazle belongs to the scandal group, yet is not wholly of it. Maria is perhaps the most vaguely developed of those having any importance in the final scene. Joseph Surface is an embodied satire of sentimentalism, the dramatic style then falling off because of Sheridan's popularity. In this case the satire is centralized in one person, whereas the attacks on political corruption, social affectation, and slander are to be found pervading the speeches of several characters. The meaning of the various persons to Sheridan himself, his reasons for including so many elements in a single play—these are some of the refreshing topics still to be examined with the acuteness that has characterized past criticism of the dialogue and situations. Anstey's *Bath Guide* (1766) and *Humphrey Clinker* give other descriptions of eighteenth-century Bath, and contemporary journals show how the play was received during the author's lifetime.

802 A portrait. These stanzas have many phrases and poetic formulæ reminiscent of Pope.

802 Mrs. Crewe: daughter of Fulke Greville, a famous beauty. She was very intimate with the Sheridans and their circle of friends.

802 36 **Reynolds,** Sir Joshua (1723–1792): the portrait painter, one of Sheridan's intimate companions.

803 99 **Millar** (or Miller), Anna. She held literary court at Batheaston. Those attending her assemblies tossed their verses into a Roman vase decked with garlands, after the fashion of Renaissance poetic contests, and the judges later crowned the chosen lords and ladies with myrtle. Horace Walpole wrote a satirical sketch of the group.

805 26 **the *Town and Country Magazine.*** Appeared monthly with sketches of fashionable intrigues in London society, usually with the persons concerned clearly identified.

809 482 **Irish tontine.** As a means of meeting the Irish national debt, annuities were sold after the manner of tontine insurance. The plan gave life annuities to the contributors, the principal finally going to the Treasury.

821 164 **the Annuity Bill.** Passed in 1777. It hindered the purchase of annuities when minors would thereby be injured.

828 Act IV, Scene I. Matthews notes that the picture scene was possibly a source of Victor Hugo's *Hernani.*

829 67 **Kneller** (1646–1723). Painted the portraits of English royalty and nobility. The description here hits at the style of setting popular in England about 1700.

842 132 **Salthill:** a mound on the Bath Road, every third year the scene of the Eton "Montem." Then, on the day set, the boys exacted fees from all passers-by for the support of their senior scholar. This custom, stopped in 1847, is described in Disraeli's "Coningsby."

849 Epilogue. George Colman, the elder, who wrote these lines, was proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre and a playwright. Among his works is *Polly Honeycomb*, whose title character is listed as one source of Sheridan's Lydia Languish. Colman's conception of Lady Teazle is not in keeping with the spirit of her last speeches, as the eighteenth-century epilogue was inclined toward striking effects rather than harmony with the play.

THE CRITIC

Sheridan staged *The Critic* at Drury Lane on October 30, 1779, as an afterpiece to *Hamlet.* His place in dramatic circles was then unassailable by reason of his success as both playwright and manager; it is natural, therefore, that the play should ridicule mildly those writers who had shown hostility because of his earlier attacks on sentimental comedy. *The Critic* was Sheridan's triumph song as well as his last noteworthy piece of drama.

He found the framework of his farce on dramatic conventionalities ready at hand in *The Rehearsal* and in the works of Fielding, Churchill, and Foote. Some similar phrases exist in his college work *Jupiter.* The play within a play had long been a standard form of satire; Sheridan merely extended it to include everything relating to theatrical conditions. Act I ridicules the petty tricks of patronage and the plagiarizing dramatist, with direct thrusts at Robert Cumberland as Sir Fretful and presumably at Thomas Vaughan through the rôle of Dangle. Don Whiskerandos has been taken by early critics as a hit at John James Hamilton. The act also has some very modern commentaries on newspaper "puffing." In Act II comes the paraphrase of passages from contemporary tragedy, with attention to its tautology, inflated diction and groans, and its tedious use of artificial situation lacking action. As for sentimental comedy, the entire field of its mannerisms is raked over in a fashion more entertaining to contemporaries than to modern readers. Important additions to these old topics of satire are Sheridan's ridicule of the charge that he plagiarized from manuscripts submitted

to him as manager of Drury Lane[1] and his praise of the leading actors in his own company. *The Critic* was unquestionably an excellent advertisement of Drury Lane.

Of less importance are the outcroppings of Sheridan's own political attachments in the references to bad conduct of the naval war against France and Spain, although this material makes the play a reflection of all his thinking and feeling at an interesting point in his career. This farce lacks the gay liveliness of his preceding comedy, but it has an attractive maturity of opinion. *The Critic* is Sheridan himself at the height of his popularity and before misfortune had turned him toward introspection and away from that quick perception of the ridiculous in human nature.

851 Dramatis Personæ. The first edition gives the names of the actors in order as follows: Messrs. Dodd, Palmer, Parsons, Delpini, Baddeley, Phillimore, King, Mrs. Hopkins, Miss Field, and Miss Abrams; Messrs. Moody, Wrighten, Farren, Burton, Waldron, Kenny, Wright, Packer, Lamash, Fawcett, Gawdry, Bannister, Jr., Miss Collet, Miss Kirby, Mrs. Johnston, Mrs. Bradshaw, and Miss Pope.

851 Mrs. Greville: mother of Mrs. Crewe, to whom Sheridan dedicated the preceding play. She was the author of several light poems.

852 Richard Fitzpatrick (1747–1813). Intimate with Fox and Sheridan. A soldier, politician, and wit of their sort, he held various state employments and was part author of *The Rolliad*.

852 1 Lord North (1732–1792): First Lord of the Treasury. He drove England on toward the Revolutionary War.

852 3 the first L— . . . of the A—: the corrupt John Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, who failed to develop England's naval power properly.

852 5 St. Kitt's. Of interest then as being the naval base of Vice-Admiral Byron, grandfather of the poet; he was operating against the French from the West Indies.

852 5 Coxheath: near Maidstone; it had a large militia encampment during the summer of 1779.

852 7 Sir Charles Hardy: in command of the Channel Fleet; he suffered abuse for prudently avoiding battle with the superior French and Spanish fleets.

[1]The basic idea of *The Critic Anticipated* (1779), a farce ostensibly by Sheridan in which he and his parents are given ridiculous rôles in a discussion of their individual merits as dramatists.

852 10 the *Morning Chronicle.* It had William Woodfall as its dramatic critic.

853 43 certainty of an invasion. This danger was fairly passed by October, when the *Critic* appeared.

853 96 the manager has monopolised the Opera-house. This is Sheridan's mild ridicule of the bitterly satirical attacks on his control of Drury Lane and his close understanding with the manager of Covent Garden.

855 216 a comedy on a very new plan. In the Prologue the author shows his distaste for both Restoration and eighteenth-century standards in comedy; here sentimental comedy is analyzed in its relation to domestic tragedy.

863 420 Junius: the pseudonym of an undiscovered writer against the ministry of Sir William Draper and the Duke of Grafton. His brilliant letters, now usually attributed to Sir Philip Francis, appeared in the *Public Advertiser* from November 21, 1768, until January 21, 1772.

863 424 Paul Jones (1747–1792): of Scotch ancestry. His famous naval victories were won between 1775 and 1778 under the American flag; then during the war between France and England he defeated, on August 14, 1779, the British *Serapis* with his *Bonhomme Richard.* After further adventures in the French and Russian navies he died in Paris and was buried there; in 1905 the leaden casket containing his body was found after persistent search and was brought to Annapolis for interment.

864 431 Charles Fox (1749–1806): a celebrated orator and statesman. With Burke he championed the cause of the Colonies; though his personality was far from attractive and his habits most erratic, he made a courageous stand with Sheridan and the other opponents of Lord North's policies.

864 10 ***The Spanish Armada.*** A fitting title inasmuch as circumstances then vividly resembled those of 1588.

865 35 Christopher Hatton (1540–1591): Lord Chancellor under Queen Elizabeth. His dancing at court first brought him to the queen's attention.

873 122 ***Lord Burleigh,*** William Cecil (1520–1598): chief minister to Elizabeth for some forty years.

876 348 Händel's water music. Played behind the royal barge in the fall of 1715, it won the composer a renewal of royal favor.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES[1]

GEORGE VILLIERS, the second Duke of Buckingham, was born on January 30, 1628, in Westminster. His father was murdered during a time of popular excitement following English naval reverses, and the young Duke with his brother came under the protection of Charles I; he was reared with the royal children and, in company with Prince Charles, entered Trinity College, Cambridge. During his years in college the Duke of Buckingham made close friends of Martin Clifford and the poet Cowley. Having been admitted to his master's degree in 1642, he was ready for activities more to his taste than those of a sequestered college life, and until his death on April 16, 1687, was thereafter constantly engaged in political machinations. The chief assets of this consummate intriguer were a quick understanding of popular feeling, great personal charm, and an intellectual curiosity which brought him into contact with persons from every walk of life.

Failure of the Royalist cause led to the forfeiture of the great Buckingham estate. The Duke sought safety in France, but before the restoration of Charles II he was again living in England. After 1660 his estates were restored, and his court influence became very great. An income of over twenty thousand pounds yearly permitted him to live in the most extravagant and profligate manner and to carry on whatever scientific experimentation took his fancy. From 1662 to 1667 Buckingham was a member of the privy council. The following years were filled with self-seeking intrigues against Clarendon, the Duke of Ormonde, and all others who stood in his light. His greatest prominence, and most unsavory, was attained after the year 1670, when a few politicians about the king sold out the interests of England to Louis XIV. Though only a subordinate in these plots, Buckingham richly deserved the punishment inflicted in 1674 through the withdrawal of all his state employments.

The political significance of Buckingham thereafter steadily became less. His pleas for religious toleration were intended to win favor with the city tradesmen and with dissenters of all sorts, but all to no avail. The Popish Plot of 1678 seemed for a time to threaten the stability of the government, but before long that danger disappeared. In 1680 Shaftesbury almost succeeded in inciting a Protestant rebellion in behalf of the illegitimate Duke of Monmouth, but again Buckingham's hopes were doomed to fail. At length he was satisfied to regain court favor without the usual accompaniments in the way of employments; in 1685, at the accession of James II, he went into retirement and died in 1687.

His appreciation of literature was of the formal sort then fashionable among men of station. He gladly patronized Wycherley, Sprat, Cowley, and Clifford for the sake of popular esteem. Custom required of the aristocracy such tribute to the fine arts; no writer was presumably too insignificant to deserve such protection. Buckingham, however, showed some personal aptitude in writing, particularly of pindarics, satires, and lampoons. A collection of such pieces from his hand was printed in 1705. He also wrote several pamphlets on religious topics, and one replying to Dryden's satirical character sketch. This last appeared in 1682 as "Some Reflections on a Late Poem entitled 'Absalom and Achitophel,' by a Person of Honor." His plays, aside from *The Rehearsal*, have suffered the same fate as these occasional pieces.

On February 5, 1667, Pepys saw Buckingham's *The Chances*, an adaptation of Fletcher's work of the same name. It was printed in 1682. *The Restoration, or Right Will Take Place*, taken from *Philaster*, seems never to have been acted, but was printed in 1714. A third piece, *The Battle of Sedgmoor*, was written against the Earl of Feversham. It was published with a dialogue, *The Militant Couple*, in 1705, but the dates of composition or of production of these works are not known. *The Rehearsal*, staged December 7,

[1] The tables of plays by each author give abbreviations for the theatres where they were produced, dates of first productions, of first editions, and of entries as found in the Stationers' Register. Abbreviations used for the names of London theatres are as follows: C. G., Covent Garden; D. G., Dorset Gardens; D. L., Drury Lane; G. F., Goodman's Fields; Hay., Haymarket; L. I. F., Lincoln's Inn Fields; T. R., Theatre Royal (i.e., Drury Lane).

1671, at the Theatre Royal, was licensed for printing on June 19, 1672; the enlarged version, in 1675.

Since Tom Brown's 1705 edition of Buckingham's works only one attempt has been made to collect all his writings into a complete edition. In 1761 Bishop Percy made a good beginning, but gave up his plan after seeing part of the work through the press. With the exception of a unique copy, now in the British Museum, this unfinished impression was destroyed by fire in 1808.

Sir George Etherege, born of an old Oxfordshire family in 1634 or 1635, is said to have studied for a time at Cambridge. Very early, however, he journeyed to France, where he gained his knowledge of life by a pleasurable indulgence that unfitted him for any serious effort. Having returned to England some time after the Restoration, he fruitlessly set himself to the study of law. It was then that his understanding of French stage fashions led him into playwriting. His first and his second comedies brought popularity and presumably led to the appointment in 1668 as secretary to Sir Daniel Harvey, ambassador to Constantinople. Thence Etherege returned to London at an unknown date and wrote his most successful comedy and a few trivial verses. This closed his literary career.

Etherege took advantage of his dramatic reputation to win the hand of a rich widow, whom he henceforth neglected disgracefully in behalf of the actress Mrs Barry. He continued to capitalize his social value until he gained a knighthood and finally, in March, 1685, the post of English envoy at Regensburg. This state appointment came through Mary of Modena, queen to James II, who for many years had been Etherege's chief patroness. After this date the dramatist seems from his own letter book to have done no literary work; now and then amid the record of official duties appear comments upon new works arriving from England, but no mention of fresh projects of his own. Following his loss of place at the Revolution, in the spring of 1689 Etherege left for Paris to pass his remaining years in obscurity. The year of his death is conjecturally set as 1691.

His three plays are written in the vein of Molière. No other English dramatist of the period made such profitable use of the noteworthy comedies then appearing on the French stage. In wit and niceness of phrase the plays of Etherege are clearly inferior to his master's, and his dialogue has less spirit. The similarity to Molière lies in the urban satire and in the type characters. With these foreign qualities appears much realistic material from the social encounters of Pall Mall and St. James Street, from Hyde Park and the Exchange. This casting of English manners in French character molds affected all high comedy written for the London stage during the next hundred years. Sheridan may be considered as a direct descendant of Etherege through Congreve and Farquhar, even though the evidence of lineage is merely general in most respects. To Etherege belongs the credit of adding to the traditions of English comedy of manners something needed to give sprightliness to the elements developed before the closing of the theatres.

All of Etherege's plays were produced at the Duke's Theatre and were promptly printed. The dates were: *The Comical Revenge, or Love in a Tub*, 1664; 1664 (S.R., July 8, 1664): *She Would if She Could*, 1668; November, 1668 (S.R., June 24, 1668): *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*, 1676; November, 1676 (S.R., June 15, 1676).

John Dryden was born on August 9, 1631, in the village of Aldwinkle, Northamptonshire, of Puritan stock. After studying under Busby at Westminster school, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1650, and gained his bachelor's degree in 1654. Three years later he was in London acting as secretary to his cousin, Gilbert Pickering, and in 1660 he began his quest of court favor by writing *Astræa Redux* in praise of Charles II.

Favor at court was won through Sir Robert Howard, whose sister Dryden married in 1663. A succession of noble patrons assumed the hereditary duty of their class until finally the poet was made historiographer-royal and poet laureate. From Charles II came also, in 1683, a place in the Customs office, and from James II a hundred-pound pension. All these sources of income were stopped in 1688, whereupon Dryden was forced to write and translate with new vigor. He died on May 1, 1700, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden's remarkably active life falls into three uneven divisions. From 1663 until 1680 he wrote twenty of his twenty-eight plays (including adaptations). An agreement made near the end of this period, to write three plays a year for the King's Theatre, was not kept. In 1681 and 1682

appeared his political satires—*Absalom and Achitophel*, *The Medal*, *Mac Flecknoe*, and the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel* (only in part his work). *Religio Laici*, an argumentative poem justifying the Established Church, also appeared in 1682. In 1687 Dryden closed his work as a partisan poet with *The Hind and the Panther*, a long and well-written defense of his newly espoused faith, Roman Catholicism. From 1687 until his death Dryden brought out his principal translations from Persius, Juvenal, and Vergil, wrote his two famous odes for St. Cecilia's Day, and staged a few more plays. His *Fables* appeared in 1699, shortly before his death. In addition to these varied employments he wrote many critical prefaces and essays. Of these the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668) is most important, on account of the liberal interpretation of neo-classic rules and the defense of rhymed verse in tragedy. *Of Heroic Plays* (1672) is also a useful summary of the grounds of heroic drama.

Dryden lacked the imagination and human sympathy necessary for the finest dramatic work. His lack of humor, a reasoning habit of mind, and knowledge of only a limited social group were permanent hindrances to his growth. What merits he possessed apart from native poetic grace in descriptive work and a colloquial ease came through his regard for the rules of classical tradition. His combination of theory and practice produced at times strangely unreal characters and situations; the total dramatic accomplishment of Dryden nevertheless was very great. His heroic drama demonstrates a determination to organize tragic action artistically with particular regard for the gallantries of heroic poetry, and in tragicomedy no one else of that generation equaled him in fidelity to the rules of Elizabethan and French masters.

The Wild Gallant, T.R., February 5, 1663; May, 1669 (S.R., August 7, 1667): *The Indian Queen* (with Sir Robert Howard), T.R., as early as January 27, 1664; 1665, as Howard's (S.R., anon., February 4, 1665): *The Rival Ladies*, T.R., August 4, 1664; 1664 (S.R., June 27): *The Indian Emperor, or The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards*, T.R., 1665; 1667 (S.R., May 26, 1665): *Secret Love, or The Maiden Queen*, T.R., March 2, 1667; 1668 (S.R., August 7, 1667): *Sir Martin Mar-all, or The Feigned Innocence* (from the Duke of Newcastle's translation of *L'Étourdi*). L.I.F., 1667; November, 1668, anon. (S.R., as Newcastle's play): *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island* (with D'Avenant, from Shakespeare), L.I.F., 1667; February, 1670, anon. (S.R., January 8, anon.): *An Evening's Love, or The Mock Astrologer*, T.R., June 12, 1668; February, 1671 (S.R., November 20, 1668, anon.): *Tyrannic Love, or The Royal Martyr*, T.R., 1669; November, 1670 (S.R., July 14, 1669): *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards*, T.R., Part I, December, 1670, Part II, January, 1671; February, 1672 (S.R., February 25, 1671): *Marriage à la Mode*, T.R., 1672; June, 1673 (S.R., March 18): *The Assignation, or Love in a Nunnery*, T.R., 1672; 1673 (S.R., March 18): *Amboyna*, T.R., 1673; November, 1673 (S.R., June 26): *Amorous Adventures, or Love à la Mode*, entered on the S.R., March 18, 1673: *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man* (from *Paradise Lost*), never staged; February, 1677 (S.R., April 17, 1674): *Aureng-Zebe*, T.R., 1675; May, 1676 (S.R., November 29, 1675): *All for Love, or The World Well Lost*, T.R., 1677; 1678 (S.R., January 31): *The Kind Keeper, or Mr. Limberham*, L.I.F., 1678; November, 1679 (with 1680 title-page): *Œdipus* (with Lee), L.I.F., 1678; May, 1679 (S.R., January 3): *Troilus and Cressida, or Truth Found too Late*, L.I.F., 1679; November, 1679 (S.R., April 14): *The Spanish Friar, or The Double Discovery*, D.G., 1680; June, 1681: *The Duke of Guise* (with Lee), T.R., 1682; 1683: *Albion and Albanius*, D.G., June, 1685; 1685: *Don Sebastian, King of Portugal*, T.R., 1689; February, 1690: *Amphitryon, or The Two Sosias*, T.R., 1690; 1690: *King Arthur, or The British Worthy*, D.G., 1691; 1691: *Cleomenes, The Spartan Hero*, T.R., 1692; 1692: *Love Triumphant, or Nature Will Prevail*, T.R., 1694;[1] 1694.

Thomas Otway was born at Trotton, Sussex, on March 3, 1652. After studying at Winchester College, he was admitted at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1669, but failed to complete his course. In 1672 he acted at the Duke's Theatre in a single play. Three years after this failure as an actor Otway saw his heroic tragedy *Alcibiades* successfully produced by Betterton, with Mrs. Barry in the cast; in 1676 his *Don Carlos* brought him added reputation. The latter was based upon the 1674 translation of Abbé St. Réal's historical romance. The next two plays also had French origins, *Titus and Berenice*, a tragedy, being drawn from Racine's *Bérénice*; and *The Cheats*

[1] Evelyn, January 11, 1694: "He [Dryden] read to us his prologue and epilogue to his valedictory play now shortly to be acted."

of Scapin, from Molière's brilliant farce. A prose comedy, *Friendship in Fashion*, brought to its close Otway's experimental period. With this medley of marital improprieties as his first original play Otway abandoned the London stage, entered army service, and for nearly two years from February, 1678, led an active life, some of the time in Holland. After a period of impoverished existence in London, he died in April, 1685.

The Orphan, produced in February, 1680, is the first piece in Otway's distinctive manner. Domestic incident, blank verse, introspective characterization, and occasional bad plotting due to a sentimental tendency—this odd mingling of Elizabethan and heroic qualities of tragedy formed a play having unusual vigor and variety. The source seems to have been a novel attributed to Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, entitled *English Adventures by a Person of Honour* (1676), but its language is derived largely from *Romeo and Juliet*. This and other plays of Shakespeare influenced *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*, which owed something also to Plutarch's *Life of Marius*. This tragedy and Otway's realistic comedy, *The Soldier's Fortune*, are slight works in comparison with *The Orphan* or his last, most significant, tragedy. Following *Venice Preserved*, his most successful play, Otway wrote only an insignificant comedy, *The Atheist*, intended as a sequel to *The Soldier's Fortune*. He also composed a few poems and translated *The History of the Triumvirates* from a French original. Most valuable as an interpretation of Otway's sentimental spirit are his letters to Mrs. Barry, which should be read in connection with his two great tragedies.

Otway's best work has distinctly conceived characters in situations frequently inappropriate. His plots are inadequately motivated, being marred by contemporary modes, and at times his "Elizabethan" manner lacks veracity. With these weaknesses are many elements of strength. His verse has an appealing beauty in passages that are freed from excessive sentiment, the backgrounds are vivid if not always realistic, and the characters have personality. These gains over the artificial regularity of neo-classic forms brought Otway great popularity among men of his time; to-day he is recognized as the master romanticist of Restoration tragedy.

Alcibiades, D.G., 1675; 1675: *Don Carlos, Prince of Spain*, D.G., 1676; November, 1676 (S.R., June 15): *Titus and Berenice* and *The Cheats of Scapin*, D.G., 1677; February, 1677: *Friendship in Fashion*, D.G., 1678; June, 1678 (S.R., May 31): *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*, D.G., 1679; November, 1679 (with 1680 title-page): *The Orphan, or The Unhappy Marriage*, February, 1680; May, 1680: *The Soldier's Fortune*, 1680; November, 1680 (with 1681 title-page): *Venice Preserved, or A Plot Discovered*, 1682; May, 1682: *The Atheist, or The Second Part of The Soldier's Fortune*, 1683; November, 1683 (with 1684 title-page).

THOMAS SHADWELL was born in Suffolk, near Brandon, in the year 1640. After private tutoring he spent a year at Bury St. Edmunds School, entered Caius College, Cambridge, in 1656, and then without a degree went into the Middle Temple. Little further is known of his experiences except that after a period of travel Shadwell settled on playwriting as a profession and was constantly at work from 1668 to 1691. He died in Chelsea on November 19, 1692, and was buried there. Westminster Abbey has a tablet to his memory.

Shadwell kept his high place among London writers through some of the same qualities as served his idol and pattern, Ben Jonson. His professions of literary taste, though not backed by scholarship, were effective, and his productivity gave his work a prominence second only to that of Dryden. Like Dryden, he was also quick to use the political opportunities of the age, and the two, though at first friends in attacks upon Settle, were by 1683 bitter enemies. Shadwell has been rated unjustly according to impressions gained from *Absalom and Achitophel* and *Mac Flecknoe*; his personal revenge came in 1689, when the Duke of Dorset aided him to Dryden's old post of poet laureate and historiographer-royal.

In all his extensive borrowing Shadwell was indebted chiefly to Molière, Jonson, and Shakespeare; over half of his seventeen plays owe something to these three. *The Sullen Lovers*, based on *Les Fâcheux*; *The Miser*, taken from *L'Avare*; and *Bury Fair*, from *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, represent his largest borrowings from Molière, but many others have characters drawn from the same source. The influence of Jonson, everywhere professed, is most felicitously shown in *The Humourists* and *The Virtuoso*; all his work has the realistic method of satire through type figures. Shakespeare's influence is clearly distinguishable in the version of only one full play—*Timon of Athens*.

In many ways Shadwell has the same limitations as Dryden; he also is in some respects in absolute contrast. Both lacked creative imagination, firmly believed in traditional rules of structure, and in some ways were literary dictators. Neither was able to impose his ideas upon later dramatists; Dryden's dramatic criticism was of slight effect, and Shadwell's little more than an echo of wiser men. As practical dramatists they were most unlike in humor, skill in dialogue, and liveliness of action; though in all these respects Dryden was distinctly inferior, he actually possessed poetic power and certain artistic excellences that Shadwell merely professed.

The distinctive merits of Shadwell are to be seen in *The Virtuoso*, *Bury Fair*, *Epsom Wells*, and *The Squire of Alsatia*. The first is an excellent satire upon the lucubrations of the Royal Society and has concrete materials from the times of the sort that make *Bury Fair* and *Epsom Wells* permanently useful sketches of seventeenth-century society. *The Squire of Alsatia* is a similar handling of rogue life in London with the added intent of reform, a characteristic appearing also in the religious satire of *The Lancashire Witches*. The last-named play reflects contemporary feeling concerning witchcraft and contains Shadwell's most noteworthy character—Teague, the rascally Irish priest, who had a long line of successors. The entire group proves that the best of Shadwell is to be classed as comedy of manners. His art is descriptive, rarely interpretative of character, and his comic muse is happiest when leading the reanimated type characters of Jonson or Molière through the lively crowds of his own age.

The Sullen Lovers, or The Impertinents, L.I.F., May 2, 1668; November, 1668 (S.R., September 9): *The Royal Shepherdess*, L.I.F., February 25, 1669; November, 1669, anon. (S.R., June 8): *The Humourists*, 1670 (?); May, 1671 (S.R., February 9): *The Miser*, 1672; June, 1672: *Epsom Wells*, D.G., 1672; May, 1673 (S.R., February 17): *Psyche*, D.G., February, 1674(?); February, 1675 (S.R., August 1): *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island*, L.I.F., March or April, 1674; November, 1674: *The Libertine*, D.G., 1675; February, 1676, anon. (a shorter version appeared later in the year): *The Virtuoso*, D.G., 1676; November, 1676 (S.R., June 1): *The History of Timon of Athens, the Manhater*, D.G., 1678(?); 1678[1]: *A True Widow*, D.G., March 21, 1679; May, 1679: *The Woman Captain*, D.G., 1679; November, 1679 (with 1680 title-page): *The Lancashire Witches, and Teague O'Divelly, the Irish Priest*, D.G., 1681 (?); November, 1681, "printed as it was intended (but not allowed) to be acted": *The Squire of Alsatia*, T.R., 1688; May, 1688: *Bury Fair*, T.R., 1689; June, 1689: *The Amorous Bigot, with the Second Part of Teague O'Divelly*, 1690; May, 1690: *The Scowrers*, 1691 (?); February, 1691: *The Volunteers, or The Stock-Jobbers*, T.R., after his death on November 19, 1692; June, 1693.

[1] See *Camb. Hist.*, VIII. Arber gives only a reprint of 1688.

William Congreve was born at Bardsey, near Leeds, England; he was baptized on February 10, 1670. His father, an army officer, was soon thereafter sent to Ireland, where the boy went first to Kilkenny School and at the age of fifteen entered Trinity College. At both places he knew Jonathan Swift. By 1692 he was in London, and a year later, with Dryden's fostering, had part in a translation of Juvenal and Persius. The same year his first comedy went on the boards, and at once his merit was recognized. Two years later, on April 30, 1695, Betterton opened his new Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre with *Love for Love*, fully confident that the venture would be a success; so complete was Congreve's command of popular favor that the new house was filled from the first night. The agreement that its author thereafter was to write a play a year "if his health permitted" was not kept, but his share in the theatre continued in force. Congreve, however, was at no time an active manager except when associated with Vanbrugh during 1705 and part of the following year in the direction of the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket. By 1700 he had ended his creative work, and henceforth depended on his post as commissioner of hackney coaches (1695–1707), as Commissioner of Wine Licences (1705 ff.), and Secretary of Jamaica (1715 ff.). The Duchess of Marlborough was his devoted patron, and all classes of society cordially welcomed his companionship. Mistress Bracegirdle seems to have been his most favored friend among the stage folk.

At his death on January 19, 1729, Congreve held an enviable place among the nobility and men of letters as well. He had become intimate with Pope, Gay, and Swift, and still held toward Steele the friendly feeling begun at the time of his contributions to the *Tatler*.

A glance at all his plays proves Congreve a more learned writer than he has been considered

in times past. Molière, Wycherley, and Etherege were his contemporary sources; Latin comedy had also a part with Ben Jonson's English "humour" type in the formation of a few stock figures. In addition Congreve drew upon other sources for a mass of astrological and superstitious matter. His plays bear this burden with deceptive ease by reason of their flow of epigrammatic, cynical dialogue. As for the standard complaint that a debased sense of propriety makes these brilliant high comedies impossible for modern readers, it need only be said that they fail from an entirely different cause. Occasional coarseness and the invariable rewarding of evildoing with good fortune speedily become matters of little importance. What tires the reader of Congreve is the unchanging coldness of atmosphere, the absence of real gaiety and charm, the automatic regularity of witty give and take. These characteristics are least noticeable in *Love for Love*, which represents Congreve at his best in point of genuineness and variety, but they are never wholly absent.

The Old Batchelor, T.R., January, 1693; 1693 (3d ed., March 23): *The Double Dealer*, T.R., November, 1693; December 4, 1693 (with 1694 on the title-page): *Love for Love*, L.I.F., April 30, 1695; May 9, 1695: *The Mourning Bride* (a tragedy), L.I.F., 1697; March 11, 1697: *The Way of the World*, 1700; March 28, 1700: *The Judgment of Paris* (a masque), 1701; 1701: *Semele* (an opera), printed in 1710 in Tonson's edition of his *Works*: *Squire Trelooby* (see Vanbrugh).

George Farquhar was born in Londonderry, Ireland, in 1678, or possibly a year earlier; the registry of Trinity College, which he entered in 1694, gives ambiguous evidence but the only that is available. He soon left college to act on the Dublin stage, where he played *Othello* and divers minor rôles during 1696; having wounded a fellow actor, he gave up acting and soon after crossed to London. His first comedy was produced at Drury Lane in 1698 with only fair success, but a year later *The Constant Couple* immediately brought popular approval.

In 1700 military service took Farquhar to Holland and during later years into many parts of provincial England as well. His marriage in 1703 was unhappy, bringing eventually poverty and the loss of his commission. The actor Wilks, who had encouraged his friend from their first acquaintance in Dublin and had shared his London successes, was Farquhar's sole comfort during those unhappy days of 1707. Under his encouragement *The Beaux Stratagem* was created in spite of the afflictions of ill health and penury. Farquhar died a month after the first performance of his last comedy and was buried in St. Martin's in the Fields.

He was the most attractive workman of Congreve's school because he possessed genuine gaiety and, through recruiting journeys, had gathered up real material that released him from reliance upon the established London vogue. Yet he was a studious workman, for his later plays are frequently marked by earlier English and French comedy. Scarron had a clearly defined influence upon him, shown particularly in *The Constant Couple*; Fletcher's *Wild-Goose Chase* was the basis of his fourth piece; and Jean de la Chapelle's *Les Carrosses d'Orléans* was a source of *The Stage Coach*, a one-act farce. In his finest work, however, he is most original. His *Discourse upon Comedy, in Reference to the English Stage* (1702) is a liberal appeal for comedy that should be "a well-framed tale handsomely told as an agreeable vehicle for counsel or reproof," not a cold imitation of ancient or even modern plays of presumed authority. Much of the essay is an ironic treatment of the "three unities." As a whole, it gives proper perspective to Farquhar's plays by showing his reasons for an unfailing avoidance of classical pitfalls. As no other writer then living had the natural power and the fruitful experiences to ignore so easily the old formalities, so no other has had equal influence upon his successors in the comedy of manners. Neither Cibber nor Steele did more than point the way which Farquhar followed through, and he consequently exerted the greater influence upon Goldsmith and Sheridan. Of Farquhar's own merits a clear knowledge may be gained by studying the plot, characters, and setting of his two last plays in comparison with the work of dramatists using the traditional materials of Restoration high comedy.

Love and a Bottle, T.R., 1698; December, 1698: *The Constant Couple, or a Trip to the Jubilee*, T.R., 1699; December, 1699: *Sir Harry Wildair, being a Sequel of the Trip to the Jubilee*, T.R., 1701; May, 1701: *The Inconstant, or The Way to Win Him*, T.R., 1702; February, 1702: *The Twin Rivals*, T.R., December 14, 1702; 1703: *The Stage Coach* (with Peter Motteux), L.I.F., February 2, 1704; 1705, anon.: *The Recruiting Officer*, T.R., April 8, 1706; 1706: *The Beaux Stratagem*, Haymarket, March 8, 1707; 1707 (9th ed., 1707).

JOSEPH ADDISON was born at Milston, Wiltshire, on May 1, 1672. He first met Steele at Charterhouse School, whence he went up to Oxford at the age of fifteen; there he again saw much of his lifelong literary comrade. After taking his Master's degree in 1693, Addison soon won patronage through the aid of Lord Somers. Though thereafter his political fortunes were conditioned by the prosperity of his party, the Whigs kept him well employed from 1704 until his death on June 17, 1719. Travels in France, Italy, and Germany occupied him from 1699 to 1703. The year after his return to London he won enduring favor with Whig partisans by writing *The Campaign*, a poem praising Marlborough for his victory at Blenheim. He sat in Parliament after 1708, and from 1710 until 1714 was a director of party propaganda. Under George I he gained the height of his political prominence in being made a secretary-of-state, the last of a series of honors granted him after the year 1704.

Immediate patronage and continued party favor freed Addison from the need of professional writing, so that his dramatic work was done casually; unlike Dryden, he made dramatic work merely incidental to other interests. His opera *Rosamond* proved him unable to write lyric verse, and *The Drummer, or The Haunted House*, is merely a farce of frigid conventionality. His middle piece, *Cato*, was undoubtedly begun many years before its staging, perhaps while Addison was in France, and its merit may be due in part to the long period giving chance for careful revisions; yet Addison seems to have brought it out only under persuasion, and its success came largely through the political interpretations read into the lines. Both Whigs and Tories applauded sentiments agreeing with their ideas of government, so that the appeal of *Cato* was general. At its best, the play shows Addison successful in declamatory passages of dignified seriousness; moreover it has the clearness of line naturally derived from training as an essayist. The theory of construction used in *Cato* harmonizes with the views offered in his *Spectator* papers on tragedy, which should be read in connection with the play itself. It will appear that *Cato* embodies better than other English tragedies the classical "rules" of French drama, a fact sufficiently attested by the applause of Voltaire. With the exception of some unspecified assistance on Steele's *Tender Husband* (*Spectator*, No. 555) Addison is noteworthy as a dramatist only for this exemplification of dramatic theories that controlled tragic composition in England throughout the first half of the eighteenth century.

Rosamond. An Opera, D.L., March 4, 1707; 1707: *Cato*, D.L., April 14, 1713; 1713: *The Drummer, or The Haunted House*, D.L., March 10, 1716; 1716.

NICHOLAS ROWE was born at Little Barford, Bedfordshire, in the year 1674. His knowledge of the classics was gained at Westminster School, and then, at the age of fifteen, the boy entered the Inner Temple. His training for the bar, however, was never applied, for at the death of his father, in 1692, a goodly legacy left him free to follow his natural inclination toward dramatic writing and study.

Between 1700 and 1715 Rowe laid the ground of his political fortunes by ardent Whig partisanship, and at the crowning of George I had his reward in being made poet laureate. His further appointments in the Prince of Wales's group made playwriting seem irksome and needless, whereupon he wrote nothing except trivial state poems. At his death on December 6, 1718, he left eight plays, a translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and his greatest contribution to literature—the first edition of Shakespeare after the Folios (1709).

All his plays contain party allusions, *Tamerlane* in particular having a long stage career because of the contrast drawn between William III and Louis XIV in the parts of the hero and Bajazet. Until 1815 it was presented annually at Drury Lane on November 5, the anniversary of William's landing in England. His other tragedies were also popular. *The Fair Penitent* is a deliberate attempt at domestic tragedy; *The Fatal Dowry* by Massinger and Field furnished the model, and Rowe added sentimental moralizing of the kind then appearing in comedy. His *Lady Jane Gray* and *Jane Shore* also rest upon Elizabethan materials. In spite of his professed imitation of Shakespeare, Rowe seemed unresponsive to the charms of woman and wholly ignored the use of comic relief in tragedy. He was quite as fully under the influence of Otway's spirit, to which he added the freedom of Elizabethan style. His plays therefore represent an advance in the slow recovery of tragedy from the limiting traditions of Dryden. Whether or not his lines have such poetic beauty, Rowe's characters are more real than those of Dryden because they express their feelings naturally and in keeping with the situation.

The Ambitious Step-Mother, L.I.F., 1700;

1701 (2d ed., 1702, has an added scene): *Tamerlane*, L.I.F., 1702; 1702: *The Fair Penitent*, L.I.F., 1703; 1703: *The Biter*, L.I.F., December 4, 1704; 1705: *Ulysses*, Hay., November 23, 1705; 1706: *The Royal Convert*, Hay., November 25, 1707; 1708: *The Tragedy of Jane Shore, written in imitation of Shakespeare's style*, D.L., February 2, 1714; [1714]: *The Tragedy of Lady Jane Gray*, D.L., April 20, 1715; 1715.

RICHARD STEELE was born in Dublin, in March, 1672, of an Irish mother and an English father. His literary friendship with Addison rests upon their association at Charterhouse School, whence Steele in 1689 followed Addison to Oxford. While a student at Christ's Church College he wrote a comedy but burned it. In 1694, without a degree, Steele entered the Duke of Ormond's guards as a private; by 1700 he was an army captain, but without active service in prospect began his social life among the groups in London coffeehouses. Remorse over a duel undoubtedly influenced the choice of theme for two of his plays; nothing further regarding his political and literary attachments from 1700 to 1715 is essential to a study of his career as a dramatist.

Steele's first play, *The Funeral, or Grief-à-la-Mode*, has the moral intent that later distinguished its author's work and is a practical satire in its remarks concerning lawyers and undertakers. The reforming tendency and occasional farcical action most effectually drove away the marks of high comedy left on English drama by Congreve, so that *The Funeral* falls into the style set by Colley Cibber in *Love's Last Shift* (1696). *The Lying Lover*, from Corneille's *Menteur*, is also a sign of Steele's later inclination toward sentimental appeal, and this play stands as the first definite representative of the school that was to hold the comic stage for a generation. His later comedies made sentimental drama popular through a development of the spirit shown in the two earlier plays. *The Tender Husband* is based on Molière's *Sicilien*, and *The Conscious Lovers*, upon the action of Terence's *Andria*, with many additions of English material. In them all Steele persistently stresses moral reform on the stage and in society.

That Steele was not a great writer of comedy must be admitted, and yet no other man of the time so fully repays careful study. His dramatic essays in the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, and the *Guardian* give proper setting for the stage history of all English comedies then being produced; moreover, his personality was felt until the year 1724 through his interest in the Drury Lane Theatre.

In January, 1715, Steele obtained the patent for producing plays there, in conjunction with subordinate holders. Wilks, Cibber, and Booth were his fellows in the agreement, but Steele was dominant until dispossessed temporarily in January, 1720, through political machinations. Thereafter his interest was slight, until in 1724, through his neglect, French comedy and opera had greatly lessened the value of this government patent.[1] After a few more years of inactivity Steele died on September 1, 1729, having lost contact with his theatrical companions through a lawsuit initiated against him for lack of interest. Throughout the years from 1700 to the time of his death, however, he had constantly exercised an influence toward natural, wholesome comedy on the English stage, and it should not be charged too heavily against his artistic taste that his successors debased these characteristics into sentimental moralizing.

The Funeral, or Grief-à-la-Mode, fall of 1701; December 20, 1701: *The Lying Lover, or The Ladies' Friendship*, December 2, 1703; January 26, 1704: *The Tender Husband, or The Accomplished Fools*, April 23, 1705; 1705: *The Conscious Lovers*, November 7, 1722; December 1, 1722.

JOHN GAY was born in Barnstaple, Devonshire, his date of baptism being September 16, 1685. After a grammar-school training he served a short apprenticeship to a London silk mercer, and then after a brief stay at home returned to London in order to venture upon a literary career. His entire life thereafter was passed in somewhat servile seeking after favor from nobles and party leaders, with fair returns. Swift got him the place of secretary to the Hanoverian embassy, only to see Gay lose the place three months later upon the death of Queen Anne. Pope patronized him unceasingly after having been lauded in the dedication of Gay's *Rural Sports* (1713). The publication in 1720 of his *Poems on Several Occasions* brought Gay a thousand pounds, which he speedily lost, with a gift from Secretary Craggs, in South Sea speculation. Two years later, however, he was made lottery commissioner and for ten years had therefrom an annual income of a hundred fifty pounds. The climax of Gay's hopes came with the crowning of George II in 1727, for long acquaintance had led him to

[1] The full account is available in George A. Aitken's *Life of Richard Steele*, 2 vols., London, 1889.

expect much from the Prince; but his only favor was an offer of appointment as gentleman-usher to Princess Louisa, and this he indignantly refused as beneath him. At his death on December 4, 1732, Gay was dependent upon his unfailing friends, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry. His indolent nature continually had led him to rely upon political and private patronage when by industry he might easily have had success through subscription publication. In fact, the returns from his poems were sufficient to provide a good living had they been properly administered.

The dramatic work of Gay is various and abundant enough to suggest greater industry than is actually evident from reading the plays themselves, for several of them are slight pieces. Most of his attempts were signally unfortunate, from *The Wife of Bath*, possibly suggested by Pope, to *The Distressed Wife*, unsuccessfully staged two years after his death. His satire in *The What-d'ye-call-it* had the aid of Pope's keen mind, but the hits at tragic extravagance and particularly at Otway were so obscure that a Key was written by others in order to explain the printed text. As for *Three Hours after Marriage*, Pope and Arbuthnot were discreet to hide their share in its obscenity and slack structure. In tragedy and in the operas following his one great success Gay was equally weak. His dramatic career shows no line of growth, but rather a spirit of experimentation in a literary form uncongenial to this light, whimsical satirist of town life.

All these criticisms fail when applied to *The Beggar's Opera*, a play that had unparalleled success through its opportuneness and because of Gay's skill in fashioning lively songs for familiar airs. He was fitted by nature to catch the popular taste developed by a decade of opera, and the supposed injustice of George II fired him to a satiric ardor of which ordinarily his disposition was incapable. Consequently the place of Gay in English dramatic history may be accounted accidental but entirely secure. *The Beggar's Opera* has in it the germs of modern comic opera; it also shows the social and political structure of eighteenth-century London in a manner unexcelled by any other play of the period.

The Mohocks, a tragi-comical farce; as it was acted near the Watch House in Covent Garden (Genest says it was not acted); 1712, anon.: *The Wife of Bath*, D.L., May 12, 1713; 1713 (republished as altered, 1730, and staged on January 19, at L.I.F.): *The What-d'ye-call-it* (with Pope), D.L., February 23, 1715; 1715: *Three Hours after Marriage* (with Pope and Arbuthnot), D.L., January 16, 1717; 1717, anon.: *The Captives*, D.L., January, 1724; 1724: *The Beggar's Opera*, L.I.F., January 29, 1728; 1728: *Polly*, never acted; 1729: *Acis and Galatea*, Hay., May, 1732; 1732: *Achilles*, C.G., February 10, 1733; 1733: *The Distressed Wife*, C.G., March 5, 1734; 1743: *The Rehearsal at Gotham*, written about 1729; 1754: *Dione*, not acted; 1720.

Henry Fielding was born at Sharpham Park, near Glastonbury, on April 22, 1707. After years at Eton and in the study of law at Leyden, he returned to London when the death of his father forced him to self-support. From about his twentieth year until the end of his dramatic period Fielding indulged in all the pleasures of the town while making a livelihood from loosely constructed farces and unhappily coarse comedies. His career properly enough has been estimated by the success of his novels, not by his plays, many of which were surely forgotten when Fielding died in 1754.

There is little unusual merit to note in Fielding's earlier comedies. The adaptations of Molière are true to the originals but have many marks of hasty workmanship. One, *The Wedding Day*, is interesting through a use of the "revelation" ending found in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*. In general, Fielding's attempts at social comedy have the intent of Congreve, without the social sophistication requisite for delicate witticism and with much brutish unpleasantness guised as humor. *Pasquin* reached higher levels of satire because Fielding was dealing with political and literary objects, not with society; yet even there, as in *Tom Thumb*, the success was literary not dramatic. It is doubtful whether anyone bears away from reading the plays of Fielding any clearly defined characterization; rather he remembers the absurdities that resemble the substance of his later satire in prose fiction. As for his moral purpose, none appears; he has only a complaisant asking that "natural" vice be unmingled with selfishness or cowardly treachery. His only reform, and that unintentional, was to incite the government to pass the Licensing Act of 1737. The political satire of *Pasquin* and of *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* brought on this act requiring the submission of all plays for reading before public performance.

At their best, however, the plays of Fielding possess the true fundamentals of satire. His dramatic and political criticisms were honestly

made, without personal animus. This is true of *Tom Thumb*, even though authors and critics are openly named in the notes and prefaces. He had that purpose to reform which Pope constantly professed, and by contrast he kept above personal abuse of his adversaries. For this reason *Tom Thumb* appeals to modern readers, who see the faults of pedantic criticism and the misapplied laws of tragic structure with clearer perspective than could the average Englishman of the eighteenth century.

Love in Several Masks, D.L., February 16, 1728; 1728: *The Temple Beau*, G.F., January 26, 1730; 1730: *The Author's Farce, and the Pleasures of the Town*, Hay., March, 1730; 1730: *Rape upon Rape, or The Justice Caught in his Own Trap*, Hay., before December 4, 1730 (when it appeared as *The Coffee-house Politician*, etc.); 1730: *Tom Thumb*, Hay., 1730; 1730 (2d ed. of that year has added scenes; the version with notes and the long title was staged at the Haymarket in March, 1731, and was printed in the same month): *The Welsh Opera, or The Gray Mare is the Better Horse* (title made *The Grub Street Opera*, etc. at Hay., July, 1731), 1731; 1731: *The Letter Writers, or A New Way to keep a Wife at Home*, March, 1731; 1731: *The Lottery*, D.L., January 1, 1732; 1732 (3d ed. of that year, with added scene): *The Modern Husband*, D.L., February 14, 1732; 1732: *The Covent Garden Tragedy*, D.L., June 1, 1732; 1732: *The Old Debauchees*, D.L., June 1, 1732; 1732 (1st ed., 1745, as *The Debauchees, or The Jesuit Caught*): *The Mock Doctor, or The Dumb Lady Cured* (from Molière's *Médecin malgré lui*), D.L., 1732; 1732: *Deborah, or A Wife for You All*, 1733: *The Miser* (from Plautus's *Aulularia* and Molière's *L'Avare*), D.L., February 17, 1733; 1733: *The Intriguing Chambermaid* (from Regnard, and Plautus(?)), January 15, 1734; 1734: *Don Quixote in England*, Hay., April (?), 1734; 1734: (changed from three to two acts, and from prose to verse, as *Squire Badger*, in 1772: in 1775, T. A. Arne made it into *The Sot, a Burletta*): *An Old Man Taught Wisdom, or The Virgin Unmasked*, D.L., January 6, 1735; 1735: *The Universal Gallant, or The Different Husbands*, D.L., February 10, 1735; 1735: *Pasquin*, a dramatic satire on the times, etc., 1736; 1736: *Tumble-Down Dick, or Phaeton in the Suds*, etc., Hay., 1736; 1736: *Eurydice* (or *The Devil Henpecked*), D.L., February 19, 1737; 1737: *The Historical Register for the Year 1736, with Eurydice hissed, or A Word to the Wise*, Hay., 1737; 1737: *Miss Lucy in Town, a Sequel to The Virgin Unmasked*, D.L., May 5, 1742; 1742: *The Wedding Day*, D.L., February 17, 1743; 1743: *The Fathers, or The Good-Natured Man*, D.L., November 30, 1778; 1778. In 1742 Fielding and William Young issued their translation of Aristophanes' *Plutus, the God of Riches*.

George Lillo, son of a Dutch jeweler, was born in London on February 4, 1693. He spent his life in the trade of his father, meanwhile writing several plays. He was a nonconformist and among the city merchants must have had a wide circle of friends. At his death, on September 3, 1739, he was recognized as creator of a new type of domestic tragedy. Little more than this is known, though many clear ideas regarding his tastes may be deduced from Lillo's plays. His Biblical training is entirely evident, as is the fact that he read widely in old English drama. He adapted Shakespeare's *Pericles*, worked on the Arden of Feversham theme, and for his *Fatal Curiosity* used an actual occurrence of the year 1618. His mind was inclined toward English themes and traditions, with which he constructed plays that justify his distaste for the forms of classical tragedy. Among many contemporary praises of Lillo, that of Fielding is most significant; therein by contrast with the writers of sentimental comedy he is lauded for truth to nature. His chief importance to dramatic history comes from the new interest in domestic tragedy resulting from his work, both on the Continent and in England, and in the likeness between his sentimental moralizing and that of the novelist Richardson.

Silvia, or The Country Burial, L.I.F., November 10, 1730; 1731: *The London Merchant, or The History of George Barnwell*, D.L., June 22, 1731; 1731: *Britannia and Batavia*, a masque, 1734(?); 1740: *The Christian Hero*, D.L., January 13, 1735; 1735: *Fatal Curiosity, a True Tragedy*, Hay., 1736; 1737: *Marina* (from Shakespeare's *Pericles*), C.G., August 1, 1738; 1738: *Arden of Feversham* (nearly finished in 1736; the ending is by John Hoadley), D.L., July 19, 1759; 1762: *Elmerick, or Justice Triumphant*, D.L., February 23, 1740; 1740: *The Regulators*, a comedy, is mentioned by Davies, but is not in print.

John Home, "the Scotch Shakespeare" in the language of enthusiastic contemporaries, was born at Leith on September 22, 1722. After having a grammar-school education, he completed a full course at the University of Edinburgh and fol-

lowed that with the study of divinity. His only church appointment was to the parish of Athelstaneford, previously held by Robert Blair. Thence he carried his first tragedies to London for Garrick's reading. Denied a hearing in London, he produced *Douglas* in Edinburgh with such tremendous success that the discreet resignation of his church post worked him no hardship. Thereafter his plays were speedily produced in both theatrical centers while Home lived upon state patronage.

None of Home's other plays reached the fame of his *Douglas*, which ranks high among early pieces in the Ossianic style. It is based upon the Scotch version of the old ballad "Childe Maurice," but has the impassioned feeling for wild scenes in nature and the austere melancholy of Thomson, Collins, and Blair.

In addition to his dramas Home composed late in life a *History of the Rebellion of 1745*. He had taken part in the war against the Pretender, and in 1778 resumed army service for a time. A fall from horseback led to complications rendering him unfit for study, but he lived until September 5, 1808, dying in his eighty-sixth year.

Douglas, Edinburgh, December 14, 1756; C.G., March 14, 1757; 1757: *Agis* (his first play, finished in 1747), D.L., February 21, 1758; 1758: *The Siege of Aquileia*, D.L., February 21, 1760; 1760: *The Fatal Discovery*, D.L., February 23, 1769; 1769: *Alonzo*, D.L., February 27, 1773; 1773: *Alfred*, C.G., January 21, 1778; 1778.

Oliver Goldsmith was born of Protestant English parents in a village of central Ireland, in the year 1728. He died in London on April 4, 1774. His father, both curate and farmer, moved soon after his son's birth to Lissoy, where young Oliver had some schooling under an old Irish quartermaster; this inexpert instruction gave the nine-year-old boy a liking for Irish tradition and folklore that has led to a popular misconception regarding his ancestry. In 1744 young Goldsmith passed from grammar school to Trinity College, Dublin, and thence five years later he laboriously bore off a degree. A feint at sailing for America, a useless try at medicine in Edinburgh, a second venture in the same field at the University of Leyden, were the steps that brought Goldsmith to his continental walking trip. This was the first natural expression of his untutored heart.

His tour of Flanders, France, and Switzerland ended in February, 1756, with a return to London, where he inefficiently tried various occupations in succession. At thirty Goldsmith had begun his hack work on reviews, essays, books for children, and incorrect historical accounts. Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds became his comrades—great solace for dull labor; their club, founded in 1763 with nine members, was a nucleus for literary and artistic spirits. Through innumerable anecdotes concerning this group, Goldsmith's way of life from then on has become matter of common knowledge.

Goldsmith's interest in theatrical affairs, however, is not so well known. He tried playwriting as a source of income on his customary experimental plan. Without serious study of dramatic principles he succeeded in spite of an artificial popular taste in drama that controlled both the leading London theatres. Garrick refused his first play, but its production at Covent Garden brought Goldsmith a total of five hundred pounds. Johnson's stalwart friendship made *She Stoops to Conquer* even more successful, for the partisans of Kelly and Cumberland could not dominate Covent Garden audiences while the Great Cham was leading the applause. Natural comedy on homely themes was revived.

After his second success Goldsmith drifted off again into miscellaneous writing. Undoubtedly the force of his dramatic genius could have been developed to higher levels, but his associates in London taverns and the Temple were too agreeable for the accomplishment of arduous tasks. Consequently he is known for his incomparable *Vicar of Wakefield*, *The Deserted Village*, and *She Stoops to Conquer*. To-day Goldsmith is loved by old and young alike. One could not safely guess at the age or temperament of those who still adorn his memorial stone in the Temple churchyard with fresh flowers; neither can the critic analyze his works by the set rules of literary types in a fashion to disturb the even progress of Goldsmith's fame.

The Good-Natured Man, C.G., January 29, 1768; 1768: *She Stoops to Conquer*, March 15, 1773; 1773.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan was born in Dublin on October 30, 1751, of parents having much interest in dramatic and theatrical affairs. He was an industrious student at Harrow and Oxford; at college his tendencies appeared in a farce called *Jupiter* (a revision of a farce, *Ixion*, by a schoolmate, Halhed), as well as in many odd bits of stage dialogue, poems, and political

sketches. Meanwhile an occasional visit to Bath was giving him insight into the frivolous side of English life.

The London career of Sheridan began in 1773, when he married and entered the Middle Temple. From then on he was a prominent person in theatrical circles by reason of his work as a manager as well as through his own writing for the stage. With the aid of his father-in-law and a Doctor Ford he bought Drury Lane from Garrick in 1776. Twice rebuilt during Sheridan's lifetime, the famous playhouse yielded handsome returns.

From 1780 to 1812 Sheridan had a prominent and fairly useful place in the House, where he ranked with his friend Charles Fox among the most able speakers on the Opposition side. His speeches against Hastings and those defending the rights of the American colonies became memorable in an age of great oratory. In 1812, however, Sheridan failed of reëlection. He had lived wastefully for many years and consequently passed his last years in real poverty. At his death on July 7, 1816, he possessed little more than the fame of his comedies. With much display and ceremony he was buried in Westminster Abbey amid acclamations of greatness that have never fallen away from his name. The comic spirit of Sheridan's best work still holds a place on the English-speaking stage; moreover his standards will always arouse other writers to emulation.

The plays not printed in this volume are useful in any study of Sheridan's development. Less than four months after *The Rivals* came *St. Patrick's Day, or The Scheming Lieutenant*, a lively farce in the style of Molière. It was written rapidly for a benefit performance for Lawrence Clinch on May 2, 1775. In November of the same year his second major play, *The Duenna*, opened the way to success that kept Sheridan from exerting himself anew for many months; when he did, it was merely to expurgate Vanbrugh's *Relapse*. This appeared on February 24, 1777, as *A Trip to Scarborough*. Many years after his final triumphs with his third and fourth major works, Sheridan in 1798 again made a stop-gap for Drury Lane by adapting a play of Kotzebue's; a year later he used another by the same German author in making his *Pizarro*.

Though Sheridan saw to the editing of only *The Rivals*, all his plays have standard texts with the exception of *The School for Scandal*. Of this he steadfastly refused to print an authoritative version, but made successive copies for his friends. As a result, the contemporary editions and manuscript remains have perplexed modern editors. A well-authenticated anecdote shows that Sheridan gave his sister the early version forming the basis of the undated Dublin edition, the first in print; this text is consequently of high authority and cannot be overvalued in any assay of materials. In spite of this fact the text of *The School for Scandal* given in the Moore edition of 1821 has been used for the present edition.

In 1902 W. Fraser Rae led many to think that he had discovered the final version of the play by announcing his edition of Sheridan's major plays "as he himself wrote them," but examination of his text of *The School for Scandal* will convince the unprejudiced that it is an early draft. To spare elaborate details of analysis, one need only observe that the Rae text gives the story of the twins twice, with identical emphasis and the same auditors, a fact proving conclusively that at the time Sheridan was undecided as to the more effective situation for its use. Other faults are the unfinished drawing of Miss Verjuice, who weakly monopolizes Snake's rôle, and gross textual faults that raise doubts regarding the editing without impairing the old tales of Sheridan's inability to spell. As for the manuscripts, Walter Sichel showed in his 1909 biography how useful they may be made in establishing the authoritative version; yet he personally made no attempt to solve the riddle, going so far as to pass over in silence Moore's claims to contemporary knowledge and Rae's "discovery" of the same decade. For such reasons and others here omitted, the 1821 text is still standard and will continue so until the manuscripts have been tested in scholarly fashion.

The Rivals, C.G., January 17, 1775; 1775: *St. Patrick's Day, or The Scheming Lieutenant*, C.G., May 2, 1775; 1821(?): *The Duenna, or The Double Elopement*, C.G., November 21, 1775; 1794 (published in Dublin as *The Governess*, 1777): *A Trip to Scarborough* (Vanbrugh's *Relapse* adapted), D.L., February 24, 1777; 1781: *The School for Scandal*, D.L., May 8, 1777; Dublin ed. [1778–1779]: *The Critic, or A Tragedy Rehearsed*, D.L., October 30, 1779; 1781: *The Stranger* (from Benj. Thompson's translation of Kotzebue's *Menschenhass und Reue*), 1798: *Pizarro* (adapted from Kotzebue's *Die Spanier in Peru*), D.L., May 24, 1799; 1799.

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